March 28, 1950 25¢

A Talk with Westbrook Pegler

by Robert K. Bingham

The Reporter

THE SOUTH MOVES FORWARD

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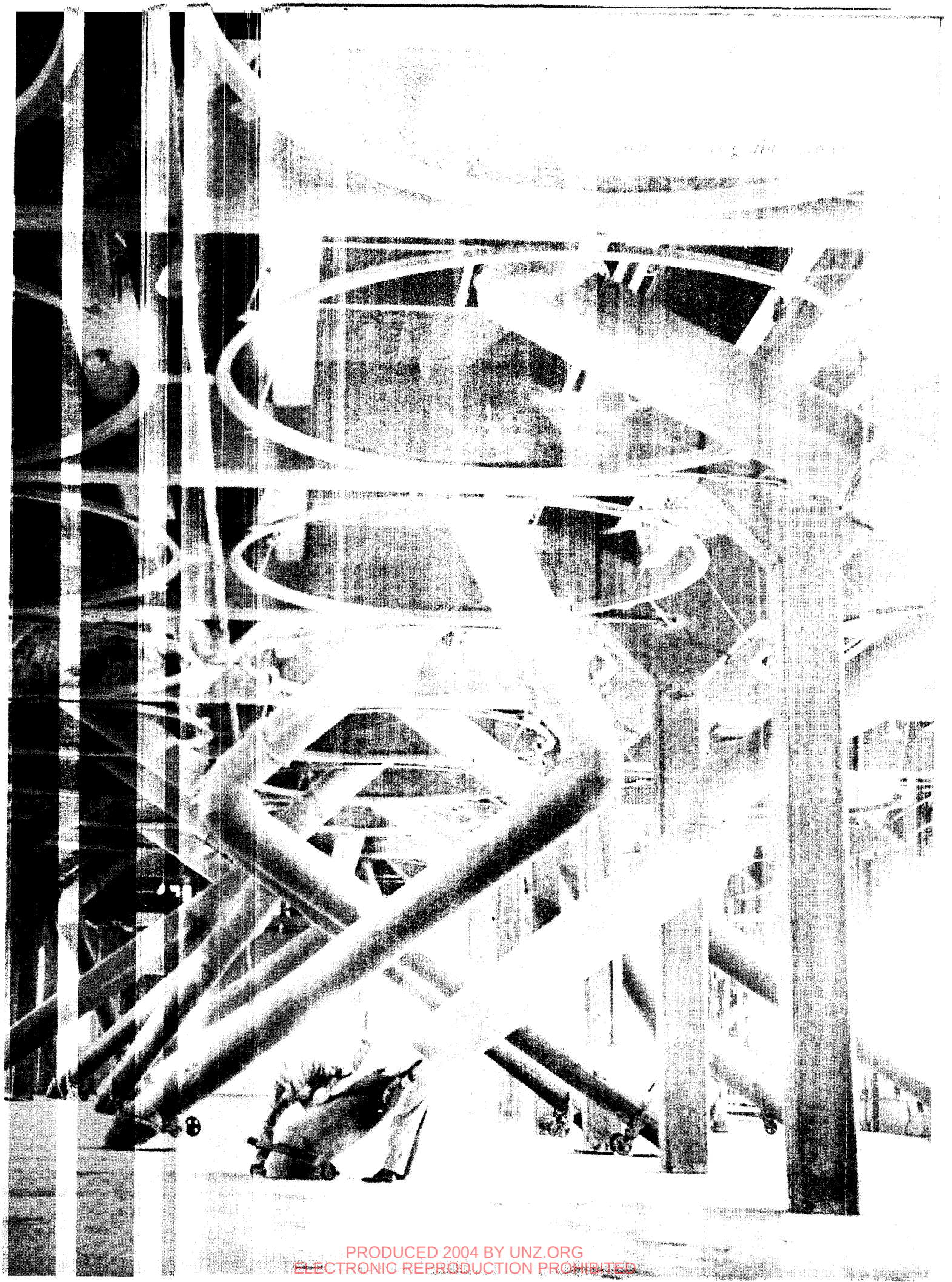

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An End to the Cold War

In one of our early issues we dared to raise our voice for some moderation in the use of the cliché—cold war. But things have been getting worse ever since. We have been reading in the papers about frozen policies, cold peace, turning a cold shoulder to Soviet Russia. We wonder why nobody has so far suggested that the policy of our government is one of a warm heart and cold feet.

Having thus proved that, in playing this cold-warm game, we are second to none, we would like to say it louder: Let's stop it; let's consider the harm we are doing to ourselves, the confusion we are bringing both to our thought and to our action, when we talk like children playing hide-and-seek.

The Communists—now as in 1918, at the time of Brest-Litovsk—want to keep the world in a condition of neither war nor peace. They want to goad us into war, at the time they think will best bring about our doom, for they have little hope of conquering us short of war. On our part, we want peace and try to devise forceful and cunning policies that may goad our chastened opponent into peace. We gain strength whenever, through economic or military aid, we give a measure of peace to a foreign country; we lose strength whenever we concentrate our talk and our thoughts on the military weapons that are supposed to settle once and for all our conflict with Russia.

This is a gigantic political conflict, which we can win only if we use all our power and our political skill to convince the people of the world that we are the party of peace. We are the peace workers, while our opponents, always fond of military expressions, call themselves the Peace Fighters. If we talk softly and deliberately, we can convince all the people of the world—East and West—that the big stick we carry is only a deterrent against reckless military adventure, from which they would be the first to suffer.

We are playing into the hands of our opponent when we use his warlike terminology—the terminology he wants us to use. Yet we keep on giving new, warlike names to basic, perennial things. We talk of psychological warfare instead of foreign policy—or plain policy. In this fight for the soul of man, we mobilize the political warrior, armed with a big bag of tricks. We run around shouting "War, war, war": cold, lukewarm, near-hot—always with the idea in the back of our minds that sometime somebody will burst out with a cry: "Boiling hot!" And then, BOOM, the game is over.

THE REPORTER kindly requests its contributors to refrain from using expressions like "cold war," "psychological offensive," "peace strategy," and the like.

The Greek Elections

We took a great leap in the dark when we decided in 1947 to back the Greek government with all-out economic and military assistance. We had good intentions, precious few men with any knowledge of Greek affairs, plus our usual wondrous and cumbersome tools—dollars, military weapons, and bulldozers.

Most of the Americans who were sent to Greece were just the plain national variety of innocents abroad. Sometimes they had to work only with one hand, for they needed the fingers of the other to hold their noses. On the Greek national scene, they frequently had to pull the coat of a particularly bad actor and show him the way backstage. They had to make it clear to many a professional friend of America that enough is enough: enough courts-martial, or enough graft, or enough reliance on American gullibility. And all the time the representatives of our government in Greece had to remember that ultimately the Greek people were going to have the last word and pass judgment on them.

A preliminary judgment came just a few weeks ago. After having defeated, with our help, the extreme left wing in open warfare, the Greek people have shown in free election that they have no stomach for the extreme Right either. The Center or "liberal" parties won the elections. The head of one of them, General Plastiras, is a rather forceful kind of liberal, considering that in 1923 he used the firing squad to retire six leading politicians from public life; but now his, as well as the more orthodox liberal, party has been told by the Greek people to run the country and give it peace. The election proved that our intervention in Greek affairs has not consolidated the right wing in power. The legitimate misgivings of our own liberals and the Communists' fond hopes have not been borne out. Our government, during the whole period of our intervention in Greece, has had no other aim than to restore freedom to the Greek people so that they could use freedom in their own—and not in other nations'—interest. It has been a long, costly pull, and we seem to have achieved some success. Why aren't we rejoicing in this success? Why is it that we concentrate all our attention on political reverses and do not even notice when something happens which proves that we are on the right track?

Our Liberalism

The question comes up over and over again: *The Reporter* is a liberal magazine, all right, but what is its brand of liberalism?

We have an answer: Liberalism without tears.

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Correspondence

Bao's Mouthwash

To the Editor: I have just reread your article on Indo-China and find myself as nauseated the second time through as I was the first.

My quarrel is not with your viewpoint, but with the biased presentation, which was the hardest slap you could have rendered to those of us who have been touting your magazine to our friends as something other than regurgitative feeding and a polite invitation to join the cotillion.

Where was your mind when you ran that paragraph on Bao Dai: "But his favorite sport was stalking tigers, elephants, and wild buffalo—which took intelligence and guts. Both traits are needed in the tangled, savage jungle of Viet Namese politics."? I imagine he uses a highly astringent mouthwash, and is fearless in his choice of an after-shave lotion as well. Or is this the first plank in a campaign to elect Osa Johnson President of Viet Nam?

I think you are quietly "slanting" the story when you put in "smiling lieutenants," and "propagandists that sneered." And how could you print as a favorable statement such nonsense as, "Both national and international problems can best be solved by approaching them in the sporting spirit?"

LOIS WESLEY
Del Monte, California

Times Defender

To the Editor: "The New York *Times* is thorough, but I find its headlines ugly and hard to read; its layout inflexible and chaotic; its writing notoriously inept and long-winded; and its editing slovenly." This was part of the lead paragraph in "The *Times*—One Man's Poison," by Dwight Macdonald, in your February 14 issue.

For the next four pages Mr. Macdonald raked the *Times* over the coals because it takes "too long to read," "is journalistically pantless," and it does not present the day's news clearly. He even accuses the editors of failing to edit.

I do not claim to be an authority since I am only a graduate student in the school of journalism at the University of Texas, but neither do I think any magazine writer is either. In my estimation the New York *Times* is the greatest and most respected newspaper in the world, and it reached the zenith in journalism without any help from Mr. Macdonald. While we all recognize that journalism has its faults, let us not be so naive as blindly to attack the one that for years has been the greatest of them all.

DON MATTHEWS, JR.
Austin, Texas

'Eye-Opener'

To the Editor: I have just read the article in your February 28 issue, "How Beulah-Land Came to Boston," by Arthur W. Hepner. Thank you for giving such generous space to the Billy Graham campaign.

The article records quite fairly the various events of the campaign, and I was amused by the comment of the unsympathetic Congregational minister, "What can we do to keep him out of here? We don't need his kind of circus . . ." That was quite in contrast to the Catholic paper, the *Pilot*, which commended the preacher and scored those Protestant ministers who scorned him.

I attended most of the meetings, which were anything but the "circus" variety. I watched Billy Graham quite critically, although I am in full sympathy with his message, and not once did I see him do or say a thing that was in bad taste. It was an eye-opener to me, for I had been led to believe that evangelistic campaigns were scenes of mass hysteria on the part of the people and acrobatics on the part of the preacher. Neither occurred.

ANTHA E. CARD
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Testing 'Turk'

To the Editor: Were the Dutch really backing bushwhacker "Turk" Westerling in his forays against the new Indonesian government, as A. Den Doolard seems to imply in "Freebooters of Indonesia," page 32 of your February 28 issue?

I propose a test. Since the article came out, Westerling has been picked up by British authorities in Malaya on an immigration charge. I suggest that if he is quietly held, or sent back and turned over to the Indonesians, then the Dutch probably were not behind him. But if he is set free, or "escapes," it will become manifest (to me, at least), that the Dutch pressured the British to permit him to continue his piracies.

T. A. LAROCHE
New York City

Contributors

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The Editors

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The Reporter
A FORTNIGHTLY OF FACTS AND IDEAS

March 28, 1950 Volume 2, No. 7

The South Moves Forward

The Region—an Editorial — *Max Ascoli* — Page 4

The Real Reconstruction Begins — *Ralph McGill* — 5

A Two-Party System in Dixie? — *Hodding Carter* — 8

Learning Under Pressure — *Douglass Cater* — 10

Three Southern Portraits:

Liberal Congressman — *George McMillan* — 13

Union Organizer — *Calvin Kytle* — 16

Negro Vote-Getter — *Harold C. Fleming* — 18

At Home & Abroad

A Talk with Westbrook Pegler — *Robert K. Bingham* — 21
The columnist reveals some techniques and opinions

An Offensive Against Atomic Insecurity — *Joseph M. Jones* — 24
Physical and moral counter-weapons

Joe Curran: Seaman in Deep Water — *Claire Neikind* — 27
The N.M.U.'s anti-Red campaign has boomeranged

Blessing in Disguise — *Graham Hutton* — 31
The bright side of the British election

Views & Reviews

Fair in Port-au-Prince — *Selden Rodman* — 34
Symbol of Haiti's hopes—the Bicentennial Exposition

Terrifying Success Story — *George N. Shuster* — 36
A review of Deutscher's *Stalin*

Death of a Document — *William Knapp* — 38
Paper versus people in Washington

To Man's Measure . . . — *Gouverneur Paulding* — 40
Spies, prayers, and catastrophe

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Editorial

The Region

Though we often forget it, the Civil War was by far the most devastating the United States has ever fought. Two per cent of the nation's population (646,352) were killed or wounded in it, as against seven-tenths of one per cent (994,893) in the Second World War. The cost of the Civil War cannot be even roughly calculated, for it produced an economic and political dislocation from which the country as a whole has not yet recovered.

Figures describe better than words what the South has gone through since 1865. The twelve Southern states, including Texas and Kentucky, contain more than a quarter of U.S. territory and population, but their share of the national income was only fourteen per cent in 1929 and eighteen per cent in 1949. The South made remarkable progress during those twenty years, particularly during the war, but it is still a long way from catching up. The estimated annual per-capita income in the South is $981—in the rest of the nation, $1,524. The average farmer in the South earns $455 a year—in the rest of the country, $995.

The South is still our internal Point Four under-developed area. Its problem is that of raising its standard of living, of further releasing the productive energy of its land and of its people. The South cannot achieve this unless it frees itself from the curse of single-mindedness which has for eighty years cramped its energies: from the single crop; the single obsession—race; the single political party. It may be called liberation from monomania: the monomania of King Cotton, white supremacy, and the one-party system.

The good news in this issue of *The Reporter* is that this process of liberation is under way. It is irreversible and irrepressible. It has been brought about to a large extent by the Southerners themselves, white and black, liberal and conservative. For the South has found a new political institution through which it can merge its energies and hurdle its major obstacles. This institution is the Region.

The Region comes between the state and the national government. It does not aim to supersede the states or to organize a nation within the nation. Rather, it integrates the action of the states and it deals only with problems that, being regional in scope, demand regional action. The Region aims at bringing the welfare of the Southern people up to the level the rest of the nation has reached.

The Region, as it is growing now in the South, is definitely a political institution, yet it will never have a capital or a government of its own. The Southern Region deals with interstate economic planning, training of competent public administrators, pooling of the states' educational facilities. It brings the governors together and gives them an opportunity to assess the common needs. Supremely anti-bureaucratic in its essence, it works through small interstate functional outfits which cut corners rather than unroll red tape. For the Region is even more than a new institution; it is a new outlook.

This outlook is always oriented toward the concrete and the feasible. The regional approach—sometimes in spite of the people who follow it—deflates old ideological bubbles and does away, one step at a time, with unthinking prejudices and age-old fears. The old semi-sovereign units, the states, are still useful as organs of local initiative, but the welfare of the people of the South, black and white, cannot be taken care of simply by the stubborn defense of states' rights. In the South, politics, national and state, is a rough, hazardous game, colorful, but still played according to ancient rules and taboos. Only too seldom does it give the people of the South the leadership they need.

In the Region, the South has found its instrument for collective bargaining with the nation as a whole. There was a time when the unity of the South against the nation meant civil war. There was also a time when some Southern poets and intellectuals, the so-called "Agrarians" or "Fugitives" of Tennessee, hailed the Region as the institution destined to segregate the South from the nation. Present-day regionalism wants to give individuals and groups in the South a chance to find their way into the main stream of national life. At the same time it rejects the idea of segregation within the nation and it diminishes the impact of racial segregation within the Region.

Southern regionalism could never have become a powerful instrument of political action had it not been for Howard Odum of the University of North Carolina, who defined the pattern of the Southern Region and trained the men to work for it.

There is no reason why the regional institution and the regional outlook should remain the exclusive privilege of the South. Indeed, other sections of the nation are becoming increasingly aware of their regional identities. In Europe the regional movement is in full swing under powerful American pressure. It is called "integration." The trend can be found in all the areas of the world free from totalitarian oppression. This old race of ours is definitely unwilling to die out because its old political institutions—its federal or centralized states—have proved unresponsive to new needs. The South, our own under-developed area, is offering the nation and the world a new hope.

—Max Ascoli

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The Real Reconstruction Begins

Moderate industrialization and more scientific methods of agriculture are slowly helping the South catch up with the rest of the nation

"You been noticing all them lone chimneys and fallin'-in shacks out in the fields?" he asked as we drove along.

"Yes," I said. "They always look lonely, and even now, with vines growing on them or bushes almost hiding them, they still seem sad."

"Boll-weevil monuments," he said. "Inside, in front of them chimneys one night, some poor, hungry devil of a nigger or a white feller, tenant or 'cropper, waited until his kids was asleep and then sat there and talked it out with his wife. They got out. They left maybe in the dead of night with a quilt or so and a few pots and pans in an old pick-up truck or a jalopy, with their woke-up young 'uns whimpering and afraid. Or, they just left by day, bold-like, and to hell with it. They was hard days there in the early twenties, when land that had growed a bale to the acre maybe turned out a bale to ten. Sometimes they set the house afire. A few did. But usually it was later that some tramp or roamin' kids set 'em just for fun. Now most that wasn't burned has fell in.

"They pulled out for Detroit and Akron. They went to Pittsburgh and to Chicago. But they went. And not many come back."

We crossed a new concrete bridge, and off to the right, a hundred feet or more from the road in a small grove of trees, stood a small church, its windows broken, its doors swinging drunkenly, the shingles gone from a section of its roof.

"See that?" my driver said. "You see more and more of them. Plantation churches. Now they're monuments, too. The tractors and the cotton pickers closed 'em. There ain't nobody to go to 'em no more. Most of the cabins is empty, with cotton growing right up to the doors. In another year or two, they'll be gone. She's a-changin', this here South is."

I had hired this man to drive me on a trip to see mechanization at work on cotton farms in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. He was no better or worse an observer than any other Southerner who goes out and looks at his region today.

The South *is* changing—fast. It is in a period of transition, in which people are leaving the land faster than jobs are opening up in the new industries. Too many Southerners are still going to Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Chicago. But the destinations are becoming much more varied. California is no longer too far away. Of course, the great industrial centers of the nation are drawing people from the land not only in the South, but also in the Dakotas, Nebraska, and other agricultural states where machines are taking over, and hand laborers are not needed in anything like the numbers they were ten years ago.

In Memphis, Nashville, and Columbia, Tennessee, in Louisville, and Atlanta, the once-great mule markets are still operating, but many of the stalls are vacant, and the lots where the long-eared hybrids brayed are often empty, or filled with beef cattle or yearling calves.

In Cleveland, Georgia, Jim Davidson, soldier of the First World War and editor of the Cleveland *Courier,* talks and writes about the new life in the Appalachians, where once corn whiskey and a few hogs and sheep were the only crops, and the burden of making a living was hard, and comforts few. Even the mountains are changing. Rural electrification has come—and still is coming. The mountaineers are planting clovers and grasses and hybrid corn. They are marketing millions of broilers each year. They are creating new, small dairies, and the big cheese firms are becoming interested.

"The mountains had it hard," Jim Davidson says. "We had small fields and couldn't compete with the big ones. Now, with hybrid corn and with grasses that will grow in our valleys and along our slopes to hold soil, we can build, and are building, a new and solid economy. There are pumps in the wells and water in the houses now. We've just begun. But we are on the way."

One of the reasons the South has punished its land so severely has been its almost necessary devotion to row crops. Added to that was the fact that the land had to support so many people. There was never money enough to carry out scientific farm practices, such as crop-rotation and planting of cover crops.

Now small factories are coming. At least one member of almost every family lives at home but works at a mill. This prosperity is reflected in painted houses and barns, in new farm machinery and washing machines. It is evi-

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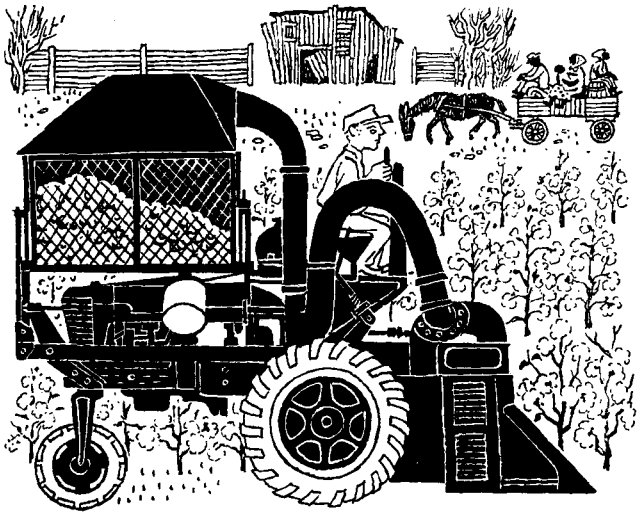

denced, too, by many small, new houses for young people who have married and built on family land.

In the South ten years ago, a green field in January was an oddity. Today all over the South are rich meadows on which cattle can graze the year around. The livestock population has more than tripled, and there is almost a distinct cult of farmers who favor the new grasses and legumes that keep fields green in winter: serecia, lespedeza, ladino, white Dutch, Manganese, and crimson clovers; Kentucky 31 fescue, and its rival from Oregon, kudzu—the miracle plant that heals land wounds that time alone will not heal, but worsen. Cattlemen from Nebraska, Kansas, and Illinois come to look, and some even stay. There is also a trend toward small grains. Many a farmer, quitting cotton, has started planting oats and wheat, and found them rewarding.

"I felt like I had got out of jail when I quit cotton," one farmer told me last June, as we rode on the combine which was harvesting his oats. His wife, who once picked cotton, was happy in her newly-electrified kitchen.

I spend a lot of time traveling around the South by airplane and automobile. When I do, I cannot help recalling the South that I saw in 1928 when I came down from Tennessee to work in the cotton region; and that I saw in 1938, on a special tour with the Presidential committee that called the South the nation's economic problem No. 1. Today from an airplane I see the greens of new pastures, the geometric curves of contour plowing, both signalizing the disappearance of the old washed, galled land, criss-crossed with gullies.

The towns, too, have grown and improved. Finally, there are the people, whose faces don't look as they did ten and twenty years ago.

But the South has by no means caught up. Measured by absolutes, it still lags in many details. Measured by the past, however, the gains have been dramatic. The South today has a feeling it is out of the woods. It still has its frustrations, and its infections, like the Ku Klux Klan, and the demagoguery of some of its politicians, but even these plagues are not as virulent as they used to be. The talk today is not so much of the two lynchings last year, but of the more than twenty that were prevented by forthright action of local law-enforcement officers. As for the Klan, it is an almost impotent organization, unfeared save in the few remote rural regions where population is sparse and frustration and poverty worst. Even in such areas, the Klan is growing less resolute.

There is no question about the improvement in race relations. It will be a long time before segregation breaks down to the degree that it has in Chicago, New York, or Philadelphia. But it has broken down at the edges enough for the two races to get together and work at solving their problems. It is easing, too, in the fields of graduate and professional education and travel. There is still a struggle going on between the old and the new attitudes, and nothing reflects it better than recent action in the Dixiecrat state of Mississippi, where the Dixiecrat governor took the lead in appropriating money to equalize educational facilities in the state, both as to equipment and pay. There are many lesser, but still important, illustrations of change and improvement in race relations, and of the corresponding increases in human dignity.

It is only lately that Southerners have come to realize that, while there are as many differences in politics, economics, and attitudes as there are states, and that the South has never been a separate entity, there are two distinct physical Souths. One is the Piedmont South. The other is the old plantation South.

The Piedmont curves, roughly like a scimitar, from the edges of New Jersey to the eastern boundary of Mississippi. Rivers run across it and along it. Roads and rail lines follow it. It saw the first power development, and the first industrialization, when cotton manufacturers began moving from New England to North Carolina more than thirty years ago. Today, most industry is clustered on the Piedmont. It has begun to wander off into some of the old plantation towns, where roads, rails, and labor supply make it possible, but in the main, it is the Piedmont South where one finds better wages, more impressive advances in working conditions, improved schools, housing, and living standards, and, importantly, superior relations between the races.

It is the old plantation South which still lags. In its most poverty-stricken counties, where the land is worn out, where the timber is used up, where for years the best young people have gotten their high-school diplomas and left, one finds the most hidebound political thinking, the most corrupt county government and justice, the most friction and race violence, and much of the drag on the South's general progress.

The first World War quickened the emigration from the South, and the second accelerated it beyond expectations. It has not really slowed down yet. A few people are returning, but there are many others going north and west.

The man with the mule, the plow, and the wagon is finished as an economic unit. He died of gasoline, and especially of tractors, one of which can do the work of seven mules. There are a few one-mule farms left but they are pitiful, as all starving and dying things are pitiful.

There is one danger in the inexorable transition—that farming may become a monopoly of the relatively few who can afford it. A good pasture cannot be made in a year's time. For some,

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three years will do, but poor soil really needs five to be rebuilt so that it will support good sod and mineral-rich grasses. There is a saying that a man ought to be in the cattle or dairy business five years before he gets his first animal. A cotton farmer without capital and with little or no income can't condition, fertilize, and grow grass for three to five years and then buy cattle to put on it. The South knows there must be a change in the farm-credit system, and it knows, too, that it has waited almost too long to agitate for one.

But, for the first time since the Civil War, the South has some capital of its own, and can see light ahead. It is surer of the road. It has more confidence in its own ability to work things out. There is a ferment of change, enthusiasm, hope, and determination that even the casual quick-tripper is made to feel.

It was in 1938 that President Roosevelt made public the study by a group of Southerners which proved the South to be the nation's chief economic problem. In 1938 the New Deal was five years old. The TVA was almost completed. Huey Long had been dead three years. The Scottsboro case was seven years old. The average per-capita income in the South was $315, as against a national average of $509. The average textile wage was only 37.5 cents an hour.

Since 1938 the South's population has increased by more than three million, despite the heavy emigration. Wages are higher, farm income is greater, and agricultural practices are much improved and diversified. There are five million more cattle. New industries have been established and more continue to come. Yet the South still receives only about a fifth of the nation's income, and still buys most of the nation's fertilizer.

In 1938, available figures show, the South mined one-tenth of the nation's iron ore, but produced only seven per cent of the nation's pig iron. By 1948, the South was producing about thirteen per cent of U. S. pig iron. In 1938, the South had twenty-seven per cent of the nation's installed hydroelectric generating capacity and a production of twenty-one per cent of the nation's total power. Today it is estimated that the South has about thirty per cent of the generating capacity and produces about twenty-eight per cent of the national total.

With more than half the nation's farmers in 1938, the South had less than a fifth of the nation's farm machinery and implements. In 1948, with about forty-eight per cent of America's farmers, the South had about twenty-two per cent of its farm implements. In 1938, fifty-three per cent of its farmers were tenants. By 1940 the percentage was forty, and the figure was estimated at only thirty-eight per cent in 1948. High land prices will probably hold the figure at about that level in 1950. Southern farms continue to be the smallest in the nation, but their average size has increased from seventy-one to ninety-four acres. In housing, the South has made its greatest advance in rural areas. Urban housing has generally been improved only slightly.

Recent application of the seventy-five-cent-an-hour wage law has raised the Southern average, but certainly its full effect will not be measurable for at least another year. This law was particularly important for the South, which has long been cursed not merely with low wages but with a curious psychology, explained by the long job-hunger, which made the South willing to accept lower wages as a sort of old Southern

tradition. The textile wage has almost tripled since 1938, but is still below the national average. Only the U.A.W. has succeeded in wiping out the North-South differential.

Since it has the most children and the least income, education is perhaps the region's major problem. Progress is being made. Georgia, for example, which had one of the most impoverished school systems, has increased its state school appropriations from $14,457,132 in 1938 to $50,875,000 in 1950. Such increased budgets are more or less the rule all over the South. Yet measured against the national figures, they still reveal a serious lag.

Perhaps the greatest improvement has been in public health, although even here the national figures reveal how far the South has yet to go. Malaria, once the worst plague, has been greatly reduced, and in many areas eliminated. The doctor shortage is most severe in the South.

According to a study made at the University of Georgia in 1935, the South's percentage of the nation's industry in 1930 was almost exactly that of 1865. It is against this background that one must measure the progress—and the tremendous lag which remains. Migration to the cities emphasizes the fact that, while there has been improvement in the farm and industrial economy, training for service industries is not receiving enough attention. These must, eventually, absorb much of the increase in urban populations.

Certainly the nation must see, as the thoughtful Southerner does, that the South's backwardness, and its influences on migration, politics, and the national economy are national problems—not regional ones.

Few in the South believe in the filibusterers, the demagogues, the Klan. But what often seems to the South almost a national policy of hostile criticism and suspicion, in which misrepresentation and error are not uncommon, makes for a stubborn defense of leaders and policies for which the South actually has only contempt. This is one of the great frustrations of the South—it must so often defend its wrongs.

Something of Lincoln's spirit and of Roosevelt's policy of aid to the South would be helpful now, because, as nearly always, fears outweigh realities.

But even so, 1950 finds the South with more courage, more willingness to subject itself to self-examination, with more money and enthusiasm, and more determination to work and sacrifice for the needs of a region which firmly continues to hold the affection of most of its people.

For a generation now the South has talked and written of "a New South." The birth pains are at last beginning.

—RALPH MCGILL

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A Two-Party System in Dixie?

It will develop inevitably, says a well-known Southern editor, even though the G.O.P. isn't doing much to speed up the process

In 1948, two delegations from Mississippi sought recognition at the Republican national convention. One was led by a venerable ex-governor of Nebraska who had moved to Mississippi thirty-odd years before and had once managed to get elected to the state legislature as a Republican. His delegation was composed principally of whites. For twenty conventions his group had tried to get seated, always in vain. Yet it represented the only active Republican organization in Mississippi.

The other delegation, directed as usual by an astute lawyer who was born in Mississippi but who has lived and practiced law in Washington for about thirty years, was all-Negro.

There was never any doubt which group would win out. The convention was worried not about building Republicanism in the South but about winning Negro voters in the North. So the inactive Negro delegation was seated. No one was surprised. The only fillip came when the white delegation unsuccessfully sought an injunction on the grounds that it was being discriminated against because of race. This was good for a laugh, of course. And it provided a good, ironic answer to the question of why there is no two-party system in the South.

In 1940, too, there had been embarrassed laughter at a Republican convention. In one rollcall, a member of the mixed Georgia delegation had considerable difficulty recalling which candidate he favored. "I vote for Willkie," he bellowed, then paused, and shouted: "I mean Taft"; and, finally, after loudly-whispered prompting: "I'm for Dewey." In Republican folklore, Southern delegates usually vote for the faction that has approached them last, though sometimes their memories are better than this Georgian's.

In the 1950 winter of Republican discontent, Senator Bricker of Ohio asked: Why not a campaign combination of Southern Democrats and Northern Republicans to stem the Fair Deal? The unfortunate thing about this remark was that it was made out loud. No one recognized this more quickly than Harold Stassen did. With an eye cocked on 1952 and an ear attuned to the protests of the Northern Negro and labor vote, Mr. Stassen uttered a politic "God forbid!"

If the Republicans are wary of the South, the South is no less wary of the Republicans. In 1948, the States' Righters won only in the four states where they had appropriated the regular Democratic Party label, controlled the tenuous party organization, and—in the case of Mississippi and South Carolina—had provided the candidates. Again, the Democratic Party—either Northern or secession wings—swept the South. At no time in the campaign did the G.O.P. try to capitalize on Southern dissent. The old pattern was unchanged. The Republicans followed their usual tactics: Disregard the South; concentrate on the big states, the doubtful ones. The South maintained its traditions: Stick to, or expropriate, the party of our fathers, despite those who would scuttle it.

These are a few incidents out of thousands, all leading to the same sense of near-futility. Behind Southern political behavior lies race conflict and race attitudes, the presence of the Negro, because of whom de Tocqueville long ago predicted that American democracy would some day founder. Add to that the venality, stupidity, and inertia of the Republican Party in its dealings with the South, and its understandable fear that any friendly overtures to the white Southern electorate would cost it many Northern Negro votes. Add, too, the same practical considerations which make Northern Republicans disregard Southern Democrats except in the Capitol cloakrooms. Add, finally, a factor which once was far more important than it is now—the South's blind and unswerving devotion to the party which, in a darker long-ago time, meant political recovery, political mastery, political perpetuation of a dimly-defined but well-understood concept called white supremacy.

To inject a personal note, I supported Dewey in 1948 after considerable soul-searching had produced the conclusion that Southern divisions made a two-party South possible, and that it was easier to cast a ballot while holding the nose with only one hand. Came the deluge. One critic was a gentle lady. I hardly knew her, but she gave me a bad thirty minutes. What, she said, had the Republicans ever done for Mississippi? Nothing. What had they done to Mississippi? Plenty. She wound up in tears.

The South unquestionably needs a two-party system. This has been well demonstrated within recent months by two Southern scholars. *Southern Politics,* by V. O. Key, Jr., now of Yale, is the most definitive study of the subject ever undertaken. *A Two-Party South?* a complementary study by Dr. Key's principal assistant, Alexander Heard, has been prepared as a doctoral thesis, and its publication is almost certain.

Key and Heard agree that Southern politics revolves principally around the Negro. Dr. Key points out that aside

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from this preoccupation, politics varies greatly from state to state, though everywhere it is shaped by the factors of desperate poverty, agrarianism, and the presence of non-voting white and black majorities. The Negro's presence makes liberalism difficult in the South; the political leadership of the South is supplied, often brilliantly, by the whites of the Southern areas which have the greatest concentration of Negroes. The one-party system exists because to maintain supremacy Southern whites have a great deal of solidarity. Dr. Key's colorful, understanding, and often wry evaluation by states results in a picture of naked sterility, a political morass in which transient, generally issue-less, factions squabble for transient power. The only feasible direction of change is the attainment of a two-party system.

Here Mr. Heard enters the lists. His conclusion is guardedly hopeful:

"No miracle is at work in the South's party politics. The pervasive preoccupation with the Negro has been only slightly modified. The social and economic conditions that underline the politics change only slowly. Political habits hang on in the face of contrary reason. But in the politics of the mid-twentieth century the South is moving closer toward a two-party politics."

Mr. Heard offers well-documented evidence that this process is going on, together with some sound recommendations for accelerating it. Behind the headlines and the headline hunters the South is undergoing profound changes; and no change is more apparent than in the region's accommodation to the reality—if not the implications—of the Negro vote, and of other, more subtle integrations of the Negro in the body politic.

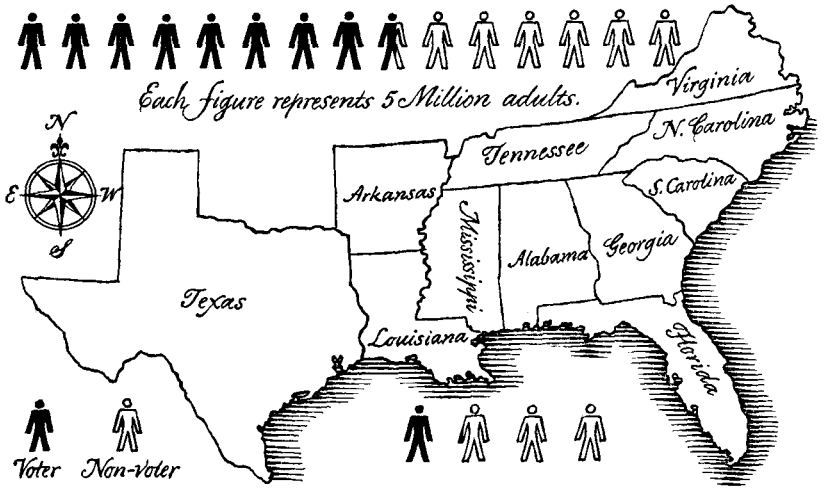
The Democratic Party is no longer a refuge for the white South, because of the growing importance of the Negro vote. Negroes will participate more and more in Southern-state Democratic primaries, since that will be, for a long time to come, their only way of taking part in local politics. The generally conservative, agricultural Southern white will tend more and more to vote Republican in Presidential elections. The urban industrial worker in the South will very likely adhere to the party that purports to speak most effectively for labor. The Southern Negro, cannily seeking the best bargain for his race, will vote where it will do him the most good, and may thereby attain within the South a balance of political power that may become as effective on local levels as it has on national levels —but also may, by its solidity, result in equally indiscriminate and dangerous counter-solidity. The emotional attachment to party will diminish. The proponents of the States' Rights Party will come to realize that neither national party can afford to make concessions to Southern racial sensitiveness. Economic progress, population and occupational shifts, the dispersal of concentrated Negro populations—all these will contribute heavily to the eventual acceptance of two-party politics.

Whether the Republican Party will soon recognize or take advantage of such trends appears doubtful as long as it is under a national and state leadership which can hardly be described as astute. Certainly there is no evidence that intelligent and active leaders are being developed by the Republican Party in the South. The small perquisites of localized power and privilege still are sought after more than the responsibilities of organization. And there appears no present resolution of the contradiction in Southern Republicanism which finds its chief strength and concentration among the "mountain Republicans" of Tennessee, North Carolina, and Virginia, whose hereditary anti-slavery yeoman liberalism would seem to make them logical Democrat recruits—just as the economic leanings of the black-belt Democratic leader would seem to impel them toward Republicanism.

It is more likely that the national party will have an active Southern Republicanism thrust upon it, rather than help create such new strength itself. The States' Rights bolters are, in a very real sense—though probably unintentionally—pioneers in the slow movement away from the Democratic and toward the Republican Party. Many of the million States' Rights voters of 1948 will probably become at least Presidential Republicans, but it takes

The South's Sparse Voters

In 1948, the states outside the South, with 404 electoral votes, recorded a vote of 43.7 million; about one out of every two adults cast a vote.



In eleven Southern states, with 127 electoral votes, 5.1 million people voted; about one of every four adults cast a ballot. In Alabama only one potential voter in seven exercised the franchise.

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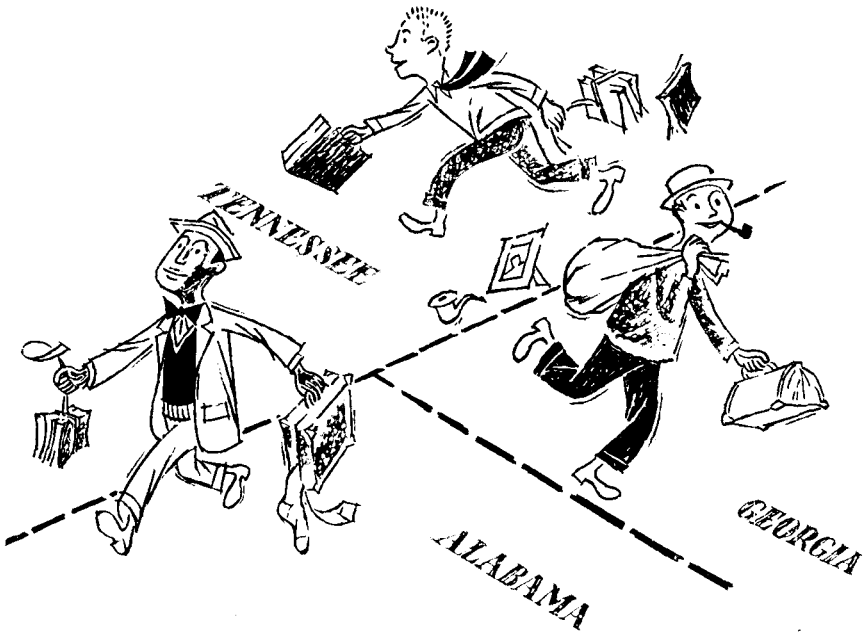
no seer to predict that the white Southerner will remain a local Democrat, and that control of the local Democratic Party will remain in white hands.

Mr. Heard's conclusion that the South will inevitably contain two active political parties is unchallengeable. His and Dr. Key's belief that Southern politics will be immeasurably improved thereby is also well founded. However, as party discipline becomes more rigid, an almost uniquely Southern political phenomenon may be killed off: the free-wheeling individualist who can take to the byways without party organization, funds, or sanction, and often emerge a winner. He is frequently a demagogue, but sometimes he is also a political pioneer, and his passing will certainly not be an unmixed blessing.

One all-important possible contribution to the development of a two-party South is still only in the hoped-for (or feared) stage. That is the proposal, known as the Lodge-Gossett amendment, to divide the electoral votes of each state in proportion to the percentage of popular votes received by each candidate in a Presidential election. This amendment would make two-party politics a working reality in the South. It would almost certainly more than double the participation of the Southern electorate in Presidential and other campaigns for national office. It would produce electoral college votes for the Republican Party from a region which now provides none at all. It would encourage creation of active Republican organizations in each Southern state. Most important, a Deep South and border region containing almost one-fourth of the nation's population would be encouraged to emerge from political lethargy, serfdom, and unimportance.

Unfortunately, a possibly decisive segment of Republican leadership refuses to interest itself in the Southern gains which approval of the amendment would virtually assure. Senator Taft, for example, believes the party would lose more electoral votes in the North than it would pick up in the South. In the short-term view he may be right. But in the long run, not only his party but the democratic process would gain—and certainly after eighteen years the Republicans should be willing to take a long view.

—Hodding Carter



Learning Under Pressure

Supreme Court rulings and economic realities spark a bi-racial, interstate education program

Less than a year after J. Strom Thurmond, the Dixiecrat Presidential candidate in 1948, had finished his campaign, that vigorous proponent of states' rights and segregation was sitting in shirt-sleeved sessions with Negro university presidents to work on a bi-racial regional plan for Southern education.

Unprecedented as this may seem, it is no more unprecedented than the interstate agency of which Thurmond, as Governor of South Carolina, is a member—the Board of Control for Southern Regional Education. Set up by twelve Southern states in June, 1949, the board represents the first effort by an entire geographical region to do something about its education crisis. The organization is empowered to assess the higher-education needs of the South, draw up plans for meeting those needs, and, after authorization by the state legislatures, carry them out.

It is in the field of higher education that the South's battle for progress has been most fiercely and revealingly concentrated, since the Supreme Court ruled in 1938 that the Southern states must provide their Negro citizens with educational facilities equal to those available to whites. "Ever since then," one old Southerner told me, "higher education down here has hobbled along like one of those three-legged teams you see at the county fair." The analogy is apt. Bound together by the Supreme Court decision, kept separate by Southern mores, Negro and white have hitched along together awkwardly, conscious of the mingled hoots and cheers of the bystanders, never sure when new rules would be laid down.

Supreme Court rulings that a state must not only provide equal facilities for Negro and white, but provide them at the same time, have put Southern states under an enormous financial strain, from which time-consuming litigation has only partially relieved them. No one knows what it would cost to duplicate Southern educational facilities. The Southern Regional Council, an inter-racial group, has estimated that merely to raise the book value of the entire Negro school *plant* in the

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South to a par with the white schools would require an expenditure of $545 million, not taking the cost of instruction and other incidentals into account. But most Southern leaders, still loyal to the creed of segregation, are unable to see any way out except building the duplicate facilities.

The problem is not simply one of helping the Negro catch up to the white. Belatedly, the Southern states have recognized that the educational facilities provided for most of their whites are pretty skimpy themselves. At a time when the region needs increasing numbers of young people trained in technical and professional skills, it has been losing many of them to other parts of the country.

This was the situation the Southern governors faced when they decided that they had to get the undernourished Siamese apparition called Southern higher education into some sort of workable shape. "Keep 'em apart but, for God's sakes, let's get things moving," was the undertone of the meetings in February, 1948, which led to the setting up of the Board of Control for Southern Regional Education. At the time there was talk of setting up new regional universities, owned and operated by the board, which would maintain segregation, but offer both Negroes and whites the best education possible.

After less than a year of operation, the board's program is not quite so radical as the one the governors envisaged. Talk of regional universities faded fast when experienced educators mentioned a few of the expenses and problems involved in building a fully staffed and accredited university from the ground up. Instead, the board has begun to pool the South's existing facilities for higher education by means of "contracts-for-services" arrangements, entitling contracting states to send specified numbers of students for training in out-of-state universities. A qualified student from Louisiana, for example, may be sent to study veterinary medicine at Alabama Polytechnic Institute, paying the same tuition and other fees that a native Alabamian pays. In return, the State of Louisiana, under the terms of a contract, pays Alabama Polytechnic Institute a fixed fee per year per student.

The logic of this particular arrangement, its supporters argue, is that existing veterinary facilities in the South are pretty nearly adequate. Not every state needs a veterinary school, but every state needs veterinarians. Alabama's school will help provide training facilities for the whole region without placing undue expense on either Alabama or the out-of-state student.

When the same arrangement is applied to medicine and dentistry (under the program this year 207 white and 181 Negro students are studying the medical sciences in fourteen universities outside their own states), forestry, social work, engineering, and the numberless other specialties of higher education, the board's basic program becomes clear. In most of these fields existing facilities are far from adequate. In each, the board proposes that a commission of the region's leading educators survey the South's needs and recommend the best way of expanding facilities to meet them. If Georgia Tech, for example, has an established reputation in technology, the commission will probably suggest that funds be allocated by the states to enlarge its capacity. Thus, the best universities will be stimulated to build better faculties and plants so that they can handle more out-of-state students, rather than each state undertaking to establish duplicative, and probably inferior, schools.

Few doubt the essential soundness of the regional-education idea. It has been discussed for a good many years by educators. But many argue that this particular program has three strikes against it from the beginning. First, its critics say that it is merely a colossal propaganda stunt on the part of the Southern governors who started it. Second, it has been hastily slapped together and is overturning educational traditions so fast that it's bound to run into trouble. Third, to quote one critic, "the rather innocently named Southern Regional Education Program . . . is actually the last stand in defense of segregated education."

To these indictments the program's supporters answer that, like every other new piece of social legislation, it was naturally inspired by motives as various as those of the people sponsoring it. But look at the evolution of the program before judging it, they ask.

If the governors wanted only a propaganda instrument, the supporters say, they chose the wrong man to direct it. This argument is borne out by a visit to the Peachtree Street, Atlanta, headquarters of Dr. John E. Ivey, Jr., the director of the board's staff. Not yet thirty-one, Ivey has a record that would do credit to a man twice his age. After getting his Ph.D. at the University of North Carolina in 1944, he rose in four years to the rank of professor of sociology. He has served as specialist in educational evaluation for the Tennessee Valley Authority, Executive Secretary of the North Carolina Resource-Use Education Commission, and Chairman of the Committee on

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Southern Regional Studies and Education. His five assistants are all comparative youngsters, and several have had the unique training in regional cooperation provided by the TVA.

One finds a mountain-moving spirit in the board's offices. There is none of the rush and frenzy of a high-pressure outfit—that wouldn't go very well in the Deep South—but there is a quiet, almost boastful determination to make the program a big one. Ivey and his staff look on the "contracts-for-services" arrangement as only a beginning. They are already at work trying to stimulate projects for the joint use of research facilities, such as the one under which twenty-four universities are using the laboratories of the Oak Ridge Institute for Nuclear Studies.

Have Dr. Ivey and his staff been hamstrung by the governors in developing their plans? Quite the contrary appears to be true. "When I see the amount of freedom we've been given," one staff member told me, "it frightens me. So far the governors haven't scotched a single proposal we've made."

That is the second strike against the program, its critics have been charging. They say the board has plunged blindly into some pretty ticklish educational problems. For example, this year, with only the medical-sciences program underway, half the fourteen participating universities are private. Should the states help carry the financial burden of Duke and Emory and other universities over which they have no control? Or, to reverse the coin, is it advisable for private universities to be beholden to state legislatures?

Certainly, Ivey argues, the program is moving ahead at a pace that may be frightening to educators who have talked about these problems so long they are incapable of acting. "But," he says, "we're not rushing into anything blindly. All told, we figure we have brought in between six and seven thousand professionals for advice at different times. Also, we have to get funds from the various state legislatures. We are feeling our way as we go along."

About public aid to private institutions, Ivey admits, "We don't know the answer. There has been a trend toward less support of private institutions. Some believe they will be greatly weakened in the next fifty years. Unless something is done to prop them up, they will become a tremendous added burden to the public."

A university president expressed the viewpoint of the private institutions: "Our problem," he said, "is never to allow ourselves to get so dependent on public funds that we can't afford to tell the politicians to go to hell. Frankly, most university presidents are not so much afraid of state aid, when they know their way around the state capital, as they are of aid from Washington."

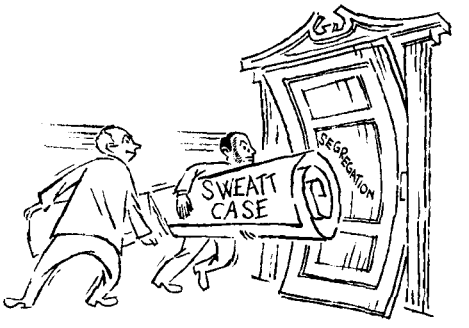
The critics' third objection is the most bitter. This program, conceived and born under a segregated education system, they say, is intended only to perpetuate that system. One day after the regional compact was announced in 1948, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People issued a blast against it. Ten other national Negro organizations, together with the Civil Rights Division of the CIO, joined the attack when the Southern governors sought Congressional sanction for the program in March, 1948. (Because of the segregation issue, the Senate failed by one vote to give the plan its blessing—but that wasn't a strict legal necessity.)

Since then there has been a running battle against the board. Prominent Negro leaders have refused to serve on it. Those who have consented to serve, first as consultants, later as full members, have been bitterly criticized as "willing to go along with the segregation idea provided the ghetto be somewhat gilded."

Look how the whole scheme got started, segregation critics say. The Southern governors talked about regional education for a long time, but they never did anything about it until they heard that Meharry, a private Negro medical school in Nashville, Tennessee, was going bankrupt, and Cecil Simms, legal adviser to Tennessee's governor told them, "If Meharry closes, Negro students would be going back to their states demanding open doors."

Segregation, these critics argue, is beginning to crumble under the combined sledge hammer blows of the Supreme Court and economic necessity. Already Arkansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, and Oklahoma have admitted small numbers of Negroes to graduate schools rather than undertake the monstrous job of slapping together separate schools which most likely would be adjudged inadequate by the courts. "What we are actually doing," U. Simpson Tate, special counsel for the N.A.A.C.P., has said, "is making the luxury of segregation so expensive that it will become irksome and burdensome to the proponents of segregation and cause them to evaluate its worth in terms of their fantasies." This regional-educational scheme, its critics charge, intends to prevent other Southern states from sharing that fate.

"As originally conceived, the program was a dodge on the segregation issue," one prominent Southerner, a supporter of the program, admitted to me, "but then it became apparent to educators that it made a whole lot of sense in a day when the education dollar is so fugitive. Segregation is going to keep on breaking down—around the edges first. I don't think it will be many years before Negroes are admitted to all the



universities. But the regional education plan will still be good."

Ivey and his staff admit they have a narrow row to hoe—hedged in on one side by the Southern governors, who in most cases are required by state constitutions to maintain segregation in the schools, and on the other by the ever-increasing pressure to break it down. But they, and many members of the board, are determined not to let the program be used as a legal dodge for segregation. "What we have tried to do," says Ivey, "is to create the first public agency in the south which is neither pro- nor anti-segregation. Our job is to build an educational system within the South second to none."

Last fall, Ivey's policy was put to the test when Miss Esther McCready, a Maryland Negro who was suing for admission to the University of Maryland Nursing School, was told that

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equal facilities were available to her at Meharry College in Tennessee, through the regional-education program. Here was a direct attempt by a state to use the program to get out of providing equal facilities for Negroes within the state. Millard Caldwell, Chairman of the Regional Education Board and former Governor of Florida, moved quickly to file an intervention in the case, stating: "It is not the purpose of the board that the regional compact and contracts for education services thereunder shall serve any state as a legal defense for avoiding responsibilities established or defined under the existing state and Federal laws and court decisions." The Baltimore City Court judge ignored the intervention and upheld Maryland's argument, but most expert lawyers feel certain that his decision will be reversed.

The board's intervention in effect pulls the rug out from under Southern states trying to use the regional-education program as a legal dodge. To the amazement of a good many onlookers, the Southern governors endorsed the intervention at their last conference without a word of protest. It marked a 180-degree turn from the direction some of them had meant the program to take.

Thus, contrary to the wails of the more excitable, the regional-education program, while building a better education system in the South, has not closed the avenues for continued legal action against Southern segregation policies. Unless the Supreme Court breaks with past decisions, it will keep on demanding that there be equal facilities within each state for Negro and white. This year, a verdict may be delivered on the Sweatt case, in which the plaintiff, Herman Sweatt, a Negro, charges that merely to keep him in a segregated Texas law school, whether the facilities are equal or not, constitutes "inequality." A decision for the plaintiff might tumble the walls of segregation in education once and for all.

Whether these walls tumble sooner or later, all at once or bit by bit, the regional-education program, so long as it stays on its present course, will not be destroyed. This act of regional cooperation, born partly out of a desperate effort to preserve the past, shows strong signs of building a more promising future. —DOUGLASS CATER

Three Southern Portraits:

Liberal Congressman

Some deeper intent than ever caught the imagination of his contemporaries seems always to have preoccupied—and sometimes to have isolated—Hugo S. Sims, Jr., the youngest member of the Eighty-first Congress. Though he comes from a typical Deep South district, the Second of South Carolina, which has for generations been represented by conservative, backwoodsy politicians, Sims has, in one term, built one of the most consistently liberal voting records in the House.

No one, not even those who have known him for all of his twenty-eight years, doubts his honesty and sincerity. And no one, especially those who know his district intimately, doubts that he will have some difficulty in winning the primary this summer. His problem —whether he has passed the point of no political return in South Carolina—is therefore of immediate interest to all Southern liberals, and to the nation.

It is quite possible that all the implications of Sims's Washington voting record may not seep through to his constituents—who are, except on racial issues, relatively indifferent to national politics—by the time they cast their ballots this summer. Sims's success or failure, therefore, may turn on nothing more than his personality, on his willingness and ability to exchange pleasantries with potential supporters.

In an environment where respect for trivialities is a requisite social grace, a boyish smile and a poise that comes partly from belonging to one of South Carolina's most distinguished families have prevented Sims from being labeled "too serious." His uncle, Henry Sims, is president of Winthrop College, a state institution of higher learning for women; another uncle recently retired from the Navy as a rear admiral, and his father Hugo Sims, Sr., is editor of the Orangeburg *Times and Democrat*.

In both high school and college Sims showed signs of his later intensity. In his *Katch*, a high-school journalistic venture, Sims "raised hell," one of his friends remembers, by interlarding charges of school maladministration with detailed accounts of student necking parties. Later, Sims went through small Wofford College in Spartanburg in three years instead of the customary four. He received his A.B. in 1941.

When the war started, Sims, though

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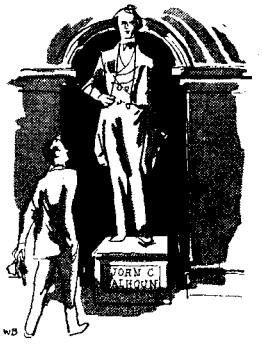
physically somewhat frail-looking, volunteered for paratroop service. "Hugo was so little he seemed the least likely of all the high-school gang for rugged duty," one of his friends has said. Sims came home wearing the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star, and the Bronze Star, as well as the Screaming Eagle patch of the 101st Airborne Division and captain's bars.

Then, with a political career in view, Sims entered the University of South Carolina Law School in 1945, and found at last an atmosphere in which his earnestness was not a hazard to his social standing.



"The law school used to run campus affairs," one of Sims's fellow students recalls. "But we didn't have time for all that stuff. We all talked among ourselves enough to realize that we were alike in one thing: We'd come home from the war for a new look at good old South Carolina. We'd seen other ways of living and we weren't too ready to take at face value all the old neo-Confederate talk."

While a law student, Sims ran for the state legislature from Orangeburg County and was elected. In that body, he committed his first unorthodox political act—on the rather warm South Carolina issue of appropriations for the state colleges. The way it works is that each college applies individually to the legislature for funds—through a lobby of almost hysterically loyal alumni. Sims proposed that all appropriations for state colleges pass through one administrative agency, a Board of Regents. Needless to say, the measure was defeated.

There may have been a lesson for Sims in this. When, shortly after, he came to his father to talk over the matter of running for Congress in 1948, and the elder Sims asked what his issues were, Hugo, Jr., replied: "No issues. The man who gets elected will be the one who knows and is liked by the most people in the Second Congressional District."

Sims gave his opponent—John J. Riley, a man with an unassailable reputation and conventional Southern ideas—a campaign the like of which the district had not seen. Aside from some talk about being for "the laboring man" and a few passes at the Federal government for intruding on states' rights (Thurmond was running for President in that same election), Sims let issues alone. The case against him was that he was too young. "I was for him," recalled one district boss, "but it was hard to get the old codgers, the ones that were used to the pompous manners of traditional Southern politicians, to accept Sims's crew haircut and his schoolboy manner."

Sims countered by taking full-page advertisements in the district's weekly and daily newspapers. THEY SAY SIMS IS TOO YOUNG, went a streamer across the top. Below were pictures of Sims's wife and their three children, and a text that read: "The General didn't think Sims was too young when he ordered him to parachute into Normandy. . . . The General didn't think Sims was too young when he gave him a rifle company to command at Bastogne . . ."

When the primary votes were counted, Sims had won, with 32,059 to Riley's 26,811. It was a record vote for the district.

Once elected, Sims purposefully left for Washington to start looking around for a committee post in which he could make his presence felt. He was the first member of the Eighty-first Congress to arrive in the capital. He failed to get his first choice, the Agriculture Committee, but got his second, Education and Labor.

The district did not hear much from Sims until he deserted his Southern conservative colleagues to vote for the measure that took away some of the Rules Committee's jealously guarded powers. "I voted," Sims explained to his constituents, "realizing that the future of the South and of South Carolina depends on the passage of many pieces of liberal legislation.

"The per-capita income in South Carolina cannot be raised by a special-interest-dominated Congress. I do not want the Rules Committee to be able to block an effective housing bill this year, as they did in the closing days of the Eightieth Congress . . . [or] legislation which was designed to help labor, or which provided for Federal aid to education, or which gave the farmers ninety-per cent support prices, or which extended social security. Southerners must stop being obstructionists or they will destroy their effectiveness as legislators."

Sims has since either voted for or advocated: repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act, a Federal housing bill, the seventy-five-cent minimum-wage bill, the Brannan plan, various pension-awarding bills, and Federal aid to education.

When the Rules Committee tried to get back its withdrawn powers, in January of this year—at a time when it seemed as if the committee was the South's best hope of sidetracking F.E.P.C.—Sims climaxed his career in the Eighty-first Congress by casting the only vote against the measure among the Congressional delegations from five Southeastern states.

Sims's district, a wedge of eight counties in the central part of South Carolina, is typical of everything that an outlander calls the Deep South. Almost all of its farmers plant cotton, and almost all of its industrial workers card, weave, or dye it.

Of the district's 362,000 people, 181,000 are Negroes. The land runs from flat to slightly undulating, and stretches of fields planted to cotton are pocked with sagging, unpainted shacks bounded by thickets of longleaf pine. Along the highways stand a few prosperous farmhouses, often shaded by oaks and with a camellia bush, or maybe two, planted ostentatiously in the center of the front yard. These are the pride of the household. The district is neither a wasteland, Gothic in its contrasts, like the low country; nor is it fertile and rich, like the up country. Hampton's Red Shirts, the body of men who finally vanquished the Carpetbaggers in South Carolina, were first organized within the district, and currently the Grand Dragon of the Carolina Klans lives in Leesville. The Klan has, by the best current guesses, from three to five thousand members within Sims's district, and openly advertises its meetings in Hugo Sims, Sr.'s newspaper.

It is, above all, a district in which political opinion and political action are largely shaped by the myth of the Old South.

Sims, who is up for re-election this summer, is finding, as he begins his campaign, that his voting record has disturbed many among even those con-

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stituents who were most deeply buried in reverie.

He has already begun the sort of door-to-door campaign which was so large a factor in his original election, and which is his substitute for newspaper and pressure-group support. He has already gained the censure of the most important dailies and weeklies in his district. In his counties there is no organized farm or labor vote, as such, although these two groups make up the preponderance of his electorate. Nor is there any Negro vote that can be counted on. These facts point up the worst irony Sims must face: The people he has done most for do not necessarily realize it.

The largest concentration of industrial workers in Sims's district is in Horse Creek Valley, a stretch of mill villages which Erskine Caldwell used as settings for several of the episodes in *God's Little Acre.*

Sims got an overwhelming majority in the valley in 1948—7,126 to Riley's 2,540—because he had an informal local organization that worked like a well-developed machine, because he canvassed the valley as no candidate had before, and because he was for "the working man."

He will still have the same political arguments and armament, except that his vote against the Rules Committee, which papers in the district have used to align Sims with F.E.P.C., has undoubtedly made him active enemies. Not one of the approximately ten thouand men and women in the valley is, as far as is known, a member of a union. The Ku Klux Klan has one of its strongest, most active units there (rumoredly three hundred members). The question is: Will the Klan in the valley take Sims's Rules Committee vote as a vote for F.E.P.C.?

The least predictable of all the groups in Sims's district—the farmers—is the largest: sixty-three per cent. In 1948 Sims carried all the predominantly agricultural counties. In the two years that have elapsed since, he has been in a bitter and open fight with the president of the South Carolina Farm Bureau, as a result of Sims's advocacy of the Brannan plan.

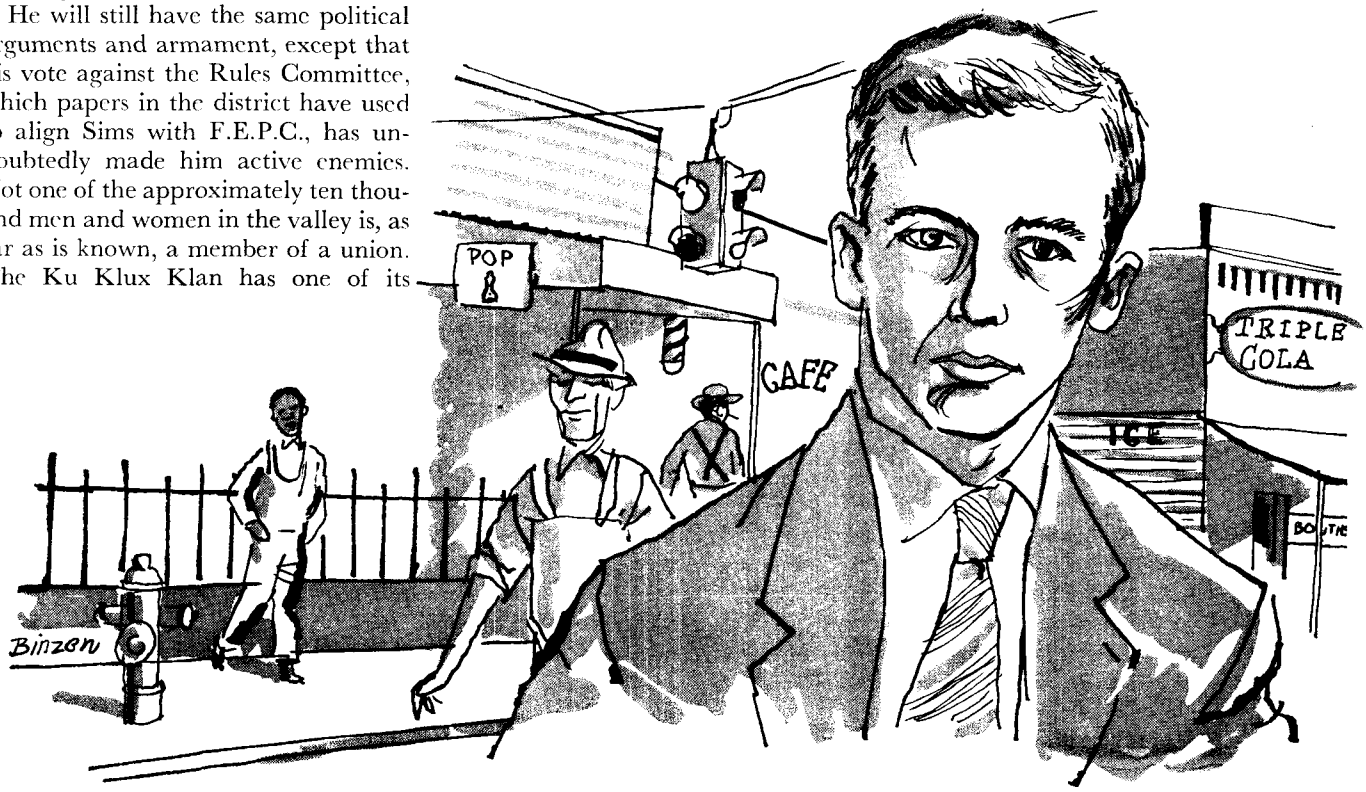
"But the farmers in South Carolina don't stick together," says B. B. Williams, a prosperous cotton farmer and veteran official in the Orangeburg Farm Bureau. "They're too independent. They won't even come to Farm Bureau meetings."

In a small, dark, cluttered office, down an alley in Columbia, John H. McCray, editor of the Negro newspaper *Lighthouse and Informer,* and chairman of the Progressive Democrats of South Carolina, talked to me about the Negroes and Sims.

"About four thousand Negroes voted in the district last time, the first chance they'd ever had to vote in the primary in South Carolina," he said. "This time we're going to do better. Our blueprint calls for twenty-five thousand; maybe we'll get fifteen. Will they vote for Sims? Well, you know he has talked against F.E.P.C., but I don't know. . . . If he'd just keep quiet on that issue . . . We don't expect any South Carolina politician to be for it, but, looking at Sims, you've got to ask yourself where there's anybody better."

Even though Sims has failed to seek the Negro vote, he has not hesitated to discuss the race issue, both at home and abroad. When the F.E.P.C. bill reached the floor of the House, on Washington's Birthday this year, Sims again outlined his position—"whether civil-rights legislation is right or wrong depends entirely on whether it accomplishes its ultimate end of attaining human rights"—and voted for only the toothless McConnell amendments, which were passed, stripping the measure of all enforcement provisions.

With "human rights" as his catchphrase, Sims has worked out an elaborate, and apparently sincere, rationalization of the dilemma of the Southern liberal. On the one hand, he has said categorically: "I am opposed to any effort to end segregation in South Carolina at this time." And on the other,



Congressman Hugo S. Sims, Jr.

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he has argued that what the Negro needs is opportunity—but that, he feels, is something that cannot be arranged by legislation, except indirectly.

"I suggest, first," he said, "that we make a huge Federal appropriation to the states on the basis of their Negro population for the purpose of providing adequate educational, health, housing, and recreational facilities for the Negro."

"Fair employment practice legislation will not give to the Negro an opportunity to become economically independent. Let us give the Negro the opportunity to develop his personality and capabilities."

Such statements as these, timid though they may seem to outlanders, still have a revolutionary flavor in Sims's district, and in making them he is pushing against the boundaries of his point of no return.

There may come a time in the South when concern for the social and economic problems of the nation will overcome regional prejudices. That time does not yet seem to have arrived in the Second District of South Carolina. If Sims is returned to Congress it will probably be because he is a pleasant and vigorous campaigner, because he is from a good family, and because, as one small-town lawyer told me, "he hasn't done enough wrong things yet to be defeated."—GEORGE MCMILLAN

Union Organizer

A personable, forty-year-old man named Paul Revere Christopher, who has been in jail more times than he can remember, is regional director of the CIO in Tennessee and head of the CIO's state organizing committee. The importance of these jobs was acknowledged, indirectly, about two years ago by an editorial writer for the Knoxville *Journal*. Shortly after the anti-Crump candidates, Estes Kefauver and Gordon Browning, had been elected Senator and governor, the *Journal* asked: Has Tennessee swapped Dictator Crump for Dictator Christopher?

Paul Christopher was more amused than bruised. His power is very far from dictatorial in Tennessee, which is one of seven Southern states whose legislatures have banned all forms of union security—the closed shop, the union shop, and maintenance of membership. Christopher and his colleagues are having a hard time organizing the state's workers and at the same time trying to get these laws repealed.

Christopher's life is not as tough, however, as it was some years ago, when he couldn't work as an organizer without frequently getting sent to prison, slugged, beaten up, or sprayed with buckshot. What distinguishes him from other men who have been through the same routine is that he has emerged with no trace of the martyr complex common among Southern leaders, liberal and reactionary alike. Efficient, charming, self-assured, he is unlike the average Southerner's stereotyped concept of a labor leader. "For goodness sake!" one stunned lady told her bridge club after meeting him. "The way he looks, he might be a bank clerk or an insurance agent or a bond salesman—anything but a labor leader!"

As a matter of fact, Christopher has all the material properties of an upper-middle-class family man. He owns a modern eight-room home in Knoxville's Highland Hills, a suburban development, where he lives with his wife, their two teen-age daughters, and a cocker spaniel. He is a conscientious churchgoer, and a heavy contributor in time and energy to the city's various charity drives.

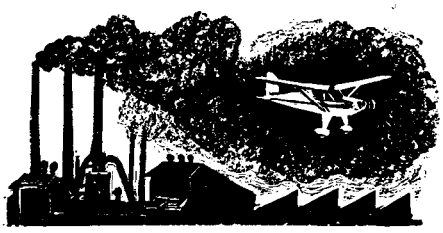
Southern bankers, manufacturers, and small millowners are organized militantly against the CIO, notably in the Southern States Industrial Council, Inc., a seventeen-year-old organization of some seven thousand members, with headquarters in Nashville. The council is fighting for the preservation of the open shop, and most of its members are not convinced of the merits of collective bargaining. Many of them are waging a running name-calling duel with Christopher, yet some of his stoutest defenders are representatives of management in Knoxville who first met him across a bargaining table. "My first impression of Christopher," one of them has said, "was that he could see what was fair, and that what was fair was what he wanted. I've worked with him since on the Community Chest and in the Good Government Group, and still have that impression."

Several big corporations have offered Christopher jobs at salaries far exceeding the one he gets from the CIO. He has never considered any of these offers. He is a union man, pure and simple, and has been almost since birth. His career, he sometimes points out, is typical of that of a half-dozen homegrown Southern labor leaders.

Christopher was born on St. Valentine's Day in 1910, in Easley, a little mill village outside Greenville, South Carolina. His father, Clarence, a loom fixer, was an ardent union man. In 1917, he was blacklisted, but thereafter managed to get work in one mill after another under a fake name.

Paul went to work in a cotton mill when he was fourteen. His mother gave him the benefit of her cotton-weaving experience, and later his father taught him how to weave silk. As a silk-weaver, he was paid up to twice as much as cotton-weavers. By the time he was twenty he was an expert craftsman, and before he became a full-time textile organizer in 1934 he had worked in thirty-seven different mills.

In 1930, Paul entered Clemson College on money he had saved from his textile work. He stayed there two years, by dint of selling hosiery, typing themes, and hiring out his Model-T Ford. When he had completed a course in textile engineering, he took a job as a



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weaver in Slater, South Carolina. He married Mary Elizabeth Lybrand in Slater in August, and in September got a job in the Cleveland Cloth Mill in Shelby, North Carolina. When the National Recovery Act came in, he was earning about thirty dollars for a 66½-hour week.

Paul had taken a part-time job as organizer with the old United Textile Workers of America, AFL, when he first went to work at Shelby. Early in 1934 he left his loom to work full time as organizer for his hard-pressed union. Before that troubled year was out, at the age of twenty-four, he was president of the United Textile Workers in North Carolina and a vice-president of the North Carolina Federation of Labor.

Paul Revere Christopher

In 1934, after the passage of collective-bargaining legislation, thousands of Southern textile workers flocked into the union. When management refused to recognize it, they dared to strike. In the main, the strikes were futile, and many employers flouted the NRA code. In September came labor's desperate effort—the general textile strike.

Textile workers in the South have never recovered psychologically from that strike. About two hundred thousand of them marched on picket lines. Thousands of troops and deputy-sheriffs swarmed into the textile centers. Fourteen workers were killed. Guardsmen with fixed bayonets charged at pickets in North Carolina. On Governor Eugene Talmadge's order, Georgia strikers were put behind barbed-wire enclosures and surrounded by armed riflemen.

After three weeks, the strikers were utterly beaten. Millowners ignored both the recommendations of a special investigation board and President Roosevelt's request to take back the strikers without discrimination. Thousands of active strikers were blacklisted; thousands more, hungry and dispirited, went back to work on any terms employers were willing to make.

It was during this period that Christopher earned the reputation for being tough. During the general strike he was assigned to direct "flying-squadron" operations in western North Carolina. What that entailed, simply, was dispatching some six thousand men in cars and trucks to unorganized mills that were still operating. Once there, the strikers would parade, call the workers out, and close the mill.

"We ran into some stiff trouble at the Stonecutter Mill in Spindale," Christopher recalled. "When we got there we found the gates locked, machine guns leveled at us from the rooftops, and armed guards just inside the entrances. Well, I pushed my way up front, told the guard I wanted to see the manager, and he let me in. I told the manager what we'd come for. He told me his guards had been ordered to shoot to kill and that there were steam pipes just outside the building which he'd turn on as soon as we crashed the gates. I told him I'd deliver his message and went out.

"By the time I got back to the front gate I found the crowd pretty much out of hand. I tried to climb up on somebody's shoulder to tell 'em what the manager had said. I remember I kept yelling, 'Don't push, don't push!' The men told me later, though, all they could hear was 'push.' They pushed. They pushed me right through the gate. The guards got panicky and ran, and we had the mill to ourselves. We took the machine guns and the ammunition, unlocked the doors to let the workers out, had one grand parade, then closed the mill down.

"All of a sudden I had the reputation of being one hell of a mean guy. It made it lots easier the rest of the time closing down mills."

For three years after the general strike, the textile union was virtually impotent. It had members, eighty thousand of them, but in all the South it had only one written contract—with a small mill in North Carolina. Finally, in 1937, the UTWA asked the CIO to take over the job. The result was the formation of the Textile Workers Organizing Committee, with Sidney Hillman as chairman.

Christopher now became a utility man for the Southern organization. In 1939 the TWOC was absorbed into the present Textile Workers Union of America, CIO, and Christopher was elected a vice-president. Shortly thereafter he went to Spartanburg, South Carolina, as state TWUA director. A year later he was transferred to Knoxville as regional CIO director for Tennessee, one of the two important posts he now holds.

"Operation Dixie"—the CIO drive in the South which started in 1946—has so far not been the success the CIO would like it to be. In the first eighteen months, there was substantial progress: Over three hundred thousand members had been signed up, to make a total of about eight hundred thousand in the Southern states; 825 new local unions had been established; and 550 NLRB elections had been won. Since then, however, CIO leadership has been admittedly reticent about releasing figures. Significant gains have been made

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in automobile parts and assembly, basic steel, steel fabricating, chemicals, communications, and tobacco. Organization of textile workers has, however, been painfully slow, and it is the 530,000 textile workers the CIO must organize if it is to organize the South. It has fewer than 120,000 of them now.

The reason why progress is so slow can be found partly in the attitude of textile workers, partly in the tactics of textile employers, and partly in the effect of the Taft-Hartley Act. During the war years, the average textile worker was paid better and lived better than he had ever dreamed possible. Since the war, these benefits have not only continued, but actually increased. Now many workers turn deaf ears to all pleas for organization, because they still have a heavy residue of the feeling that came after the disastrous strike of 1934—that unionization can only mean trouble.

Textile management, which is paternalistic by nature, has played an extremely clever game. It has anticipated CIO demands and voluntarily granted benefits that equal or better them. "You see?" the workers have been told. "You don't need a union." As a consequence, mill after mill remains unorganized, and workers in the unorganized mills are getting pretty much the same wages and the same benefits as those in the organized ones. Today, for instance, union textile contracts in the South call for ninety-four cents an hour as a basic wage, while the average is $1.10.

The CIO claims, also, that two provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act have been particularly crippling. First, the unions fear that foremen can engage in unfair practices "individually" and not be considered agents of the millowner. Secondly, now that hearings are required before elections, six or eight months commonly elapse between a union petition to the NLRB and the time an election is held.

In the face of these obstacles, Christopher's organizing program has progressed as well as that in any other Southern state and better than in most. Within the state organization of which he is co-ordinator are some three hundred locals, representing thirty-one different unions, and 102,000 workers. (Perhaps Christopher's most spectacular achievement has been the organization of two of the three large plants at Oak Ridge.) Christopher divides his time between superintending the work of the fourteen organizers under him and carrying out his other duties as overseer of the Tennessee locals. Whenever there's a conflict, however, organizing takes precedence.

As in all Southern states, most of labor's influence in Tennessee is exerted subtly. Having learned from previous Political Action Committee experience that public endorsement by the CIO was often the kiss of death, Christopher scrupulously avoided any public exhibition of support for either Kefauver or Browning in 1948. Behind the scenes, though, the CIO worked hard and conscientiously.

Christopher is entirely pleased with Kefauver, but finds Governor Browning somewhat wanting in liberalism. "Some people call Browning an opportunist. If he is, that's all right with us," he said. "We just intend to show him that his opportunities lie with labor." By that, Christopher means that the CIO hopes to have Browning include the repeal of anti-labor bills in his platform for re-election.

Christopher's attitude toward the Negro and the CIO policy toward the Negro are one and the same—that the South cannot advance unless the Negro advances. The Negro is a frequent issue in contract negotiations, when management, eager to hold on to its cheap labor, would like to set up discriminatory wage scales. Christopher's answer to such proposals is simply: "We're not interested in race rates or sex rates: We're interested in wage rates."

Christopher's job no longer requires the use of his fists or flying squadrons, but when the occasion demands, he is quite prepared to be tough. Several years ago, two of his men were stripped, tarred, and beaten—one so severely that he later lost his mind—while organizing a paper mill in Roane County, Tennessee. The sheriff refused to do anything about it. Christopher marched into his office on the day before the NLRB poll and demanded official protection for a pre-election meeting that night. "I'm telling you that if so much as one shot is fired tonight by anybody," he said bluntly, "you won't be alive tomorrow." No shots were fired. The next day, the union won the election by a convincing margin. —CALVIN KYTLE

Negro Vote-Getter

Whenever the mud starts flying in Georgia politics — and that is often — the name Austin Thomas Walden takes on sudden and diabolical significance. "My opponent," charged Herman Talmadge in the last gubernatorial campaign, "doesn't dare make a move without first calling up A. T. Walden." That was enough to disturb the digestion of many a Georgian. For, in the folklore of Talmadgeism, Walden represents everything that might threaten white dominance—"radicalism," civil rights, non-segregation, and the so-called Negro "bloc vote."

Austin Walden is an Atlanta Negro lawyer who, at sixty-five, holds a position of leadership in more organizations and activities than he can conveniently remember. Among other things, he is a member of the National Legal Committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, President of the Georgia Association of Citizens' Democratic Clubs, Chairman of the Board of the Atlanta Urban League, and counsel for the National Baptist Convention, the Knights of Pythias, and the Citizens Trust Company of Atlanta. Often to his regret, there is nothing honorary about these titles; each of them carries with it hours of committee meetings, speechmaking, travel, or court appear-

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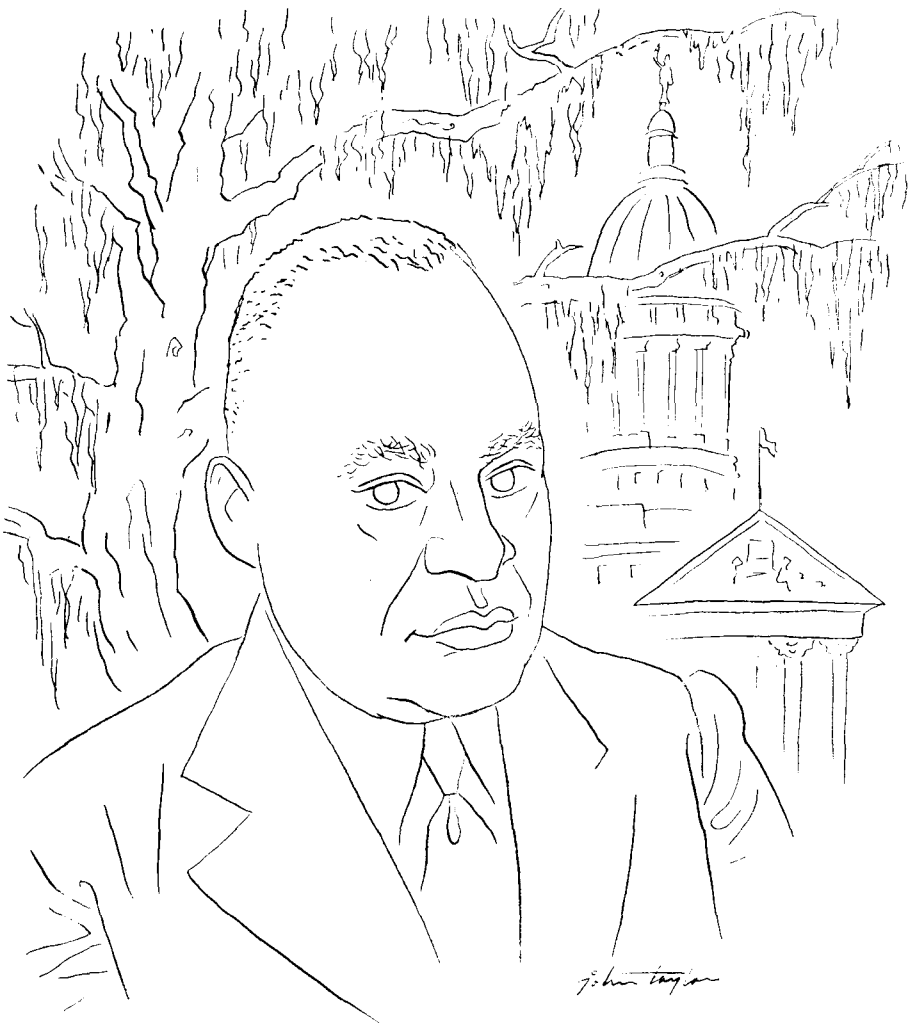
ances. Yet Walden still finds time to carry on his regular law practice and to serve as oracle to a steady stream of visitors from other states and even from other countries.

Walden is a sturdy, pugnacious-looking man of slightly coppery complexion. Though undisputed dean of Georgia's Negro leaders, he is self-effacing, devoted to understatement and long silences. This reserve is not wholly a matter of temperament. It reflects the experience of thirty-eight years as a Negro lawyer before Southern white judges and juries, where an economy of words has often proved the better part of courtroom valor, as well as a winning tactic.



Austin Thomas Walden

Tenacity and purpose have marked Walden's career ever since he was a child. By the time he was fourteen he had not only chosen his career but had picked his law school and decided where he would begin practice as well. "There was a white lawyer in our town," he recalls. "He was a high-type, Christian man. They called him an honest lawyer. I decided that's what I wanted to be."

In 1912, with a law degree from the University of Michigan, Walden was admitted to the Georgia bar and set up an office in Macon. Since Negro lawyers were a rarity in those days, spectators often jammed the courtrooms to watch him perform. Juries were frequently hostile, but most of the judges were kind, or at least impartial. On one occasion, when he was pleading a case in a small south-Georgia town, the judge abruptly adjourned the court and insisted that Walden ride back to Macon with him. Walden accepted the ride with thanks and thought no more of it. It was not until years later that he discovered the reason for the judge's solicitude: He had learned that a mob was forming in the town to "take care of that nigger lawyer."

That is as close as Walden has ever come to "being taken care of," though he has been threatened more than once. He is inclined to credit his immunity from actual violence to a bit of his personal history that got spread about early in the 1930's. At that time, he was distinctly unpopular in Klan circles, for he was assisting the state in the prosecution of eight white men accused of murdering a Negro student. The courthouse overflowed with antagonistic spectators, and Walden's telephone crackled day and night with angry threats. When six of the men on trial were convicted and given long prison sentences, the presiding judge suggested that he take a vacation elsewhere. Walden stayed in Atlanta. He also stayed in good health. It seems the word was out that "that nigger lawyer" had been an infantry captain in the First World War, was skilled in the use of small arms, and was generally a bad man to trifle with. Walden still wonders what would have happened if it had been known that he spent most of the war as an assistant division judge advocate.

Today Walden handles more civil than criminal cases. His work for the N.A.A.C.P. is increasingly concerned with discrimination in public services. Currently he is conducting a suit against the school authorities of Irwin County, Georgia, to compel equalization of school facilities for Negro children. If the suit is successful—and few doubt that it will be—Georgia's elected officials will have to do some expensive reforming. Their distress can be gauged by the howl of rage with which Governor Talmadge greeted the filing of the suit. "This litigation," he exploded, "is the opening wedge to break down segregation in the Southern states. It is a move by disgruntled agitators from Northern states to destroy all that the farseeing white and Negro people have accomplished in the last few generations."

It is hard to say at what point Walden the lawyer becomes Walden the political leader. Asked about the inordinate political influence attributed to him by Herman Talmadge, he murmured: "I had no idea I was so important." Important or not, as presi-

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dent of the Georgia Association of Citizens' Democratic Clubs, Walden is regarded as the "boss" of the Negro vote by politicians of every stripe. The Talmadge forces eye him with uneasiness, the opposition with hope, but he has doubtless received overtures from both camps.

The Georgia Association of Citizens' Democratic Clubs, like Negro suffrage in Georgia, is a recent phenomenon. It came into being six years ago after a Federal court decision broke the back of the "white primary." For the first time, Negroes were eligible to cast their ballots in the Democratic primary, the one meaningful election in the state. But after forty years of disfranchisement, most Negroes had come to look on politics as "white folks' business." They had almost no political organization, except in Atlanta, where Negroes had tried to vote in the city primary.

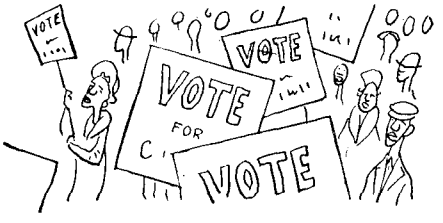
Fortunately, there were other networks over the state—churches, fraternities, business organizations—which could be converted into channels of voting consciousness. Walden himself traveled three thousand miles into sixty of Georgia's 159 counties seeking out local leaders. When he and other industrious Negro Democrats had finished, there were Democratic clubs in seven out of the ten Congressional districts. And by the time the 1946 primary was held, the number of registered Negro voters had jumped from twenty thousand to one hundred thousand.

To the Talmadge following, the fruits of this political cultivation were sour indeed. The late Eugene Talmadge won the nomination, it is true, but only by virtue of Georgia's unique institution, the county unit system; his principal opponent, James V. Carmichael, emerged with a popular majority of some sixteen thousand votes. It required no particular insight to deduce that most of the hundred thousand Negro votes had gone to Carmichael. The Talmadgeites not only made the deduction, but also advertised it widely. As a result, the vocabulary of politically-conscious Georgians was enriched by the phrase "bloc voting"—a semantic curiosity which refers solely to the stubborn Negro habit of voting against white-supremacists.

It is the "bloc vote" which, according to anti-Negro spokesmen, Walden and a few others can deliver at will. The implication is that Negro support is available to the highest bidder. (Actually, there has been surprisingly little evidence of venality among Negro voters or their leaders—and this in a state where political venality is commonplace.) Walden shrugs off these charges as mere demagoguery. "The few Negroes who can be bought," he says, "have nothing to sell. And those who do have influence wouldn't have it long if they sold out." He is equally concise about the matter of bloc voting: "Our people split along the same lines as any other voters when they are given the chance. Naturally they will vote against a candidate who is opposed to their voting."

Like most Negroes of his generation, Walden has not always been a Democrat. Until about fifteen years ago, he was a Republican, simply because "there was nowhere else to go." In the mid-1930's, however, it occurred to Walden and a good many other Negroes that they could at least throw their support behind independent candidates in the general election. As it turned out, this too was unrewarding, for no appreciable number of whites could be lured away from the Democratic Party, and the Negro vote was too small to count for much.

Obviously the only hope lay in battering down the door of the inhospitable Democratic Party. A Supreme Court ruling in 1944 opened the way by declaring that Negroes could not be excluded from the Democratic primary in Texas. A similar action was promptly brought in Georgia by a Negro preacher named Primus King. This case was still in litigation when Walden and several other Atlanta Negroes presented themselves at the polls in an effort to vote in the city primary. There Walden was greeted with the disheartening news that his name did not appear on the voters' list, although he had duly qualified and registered. This stock answer was given all the other Negroes. On behalf of one of them, Walden immediately filed suit against the local registrars; but before a decision was reached a favorable ruling in the King case put an end to the whole business.



Yet Georgia's Negroes continue to find stumbling blocks between them and the polls. In many of the rural counties it is still hazardous for a Negro to try to register and vote. He may get a visit from a delegation of Klansmen, or Klan-inspired hoodlums. If he is a tenant farmer, he may find his landlord violently antipathetic to any such new tomfoolery as Negro voting. To make matters worse, the legislature has passed a law which would, in two years (and probably only if Talmadge remains in power), wipe out the existing registration and force every prospective voter to submit to a new "qualifications test" administered by the registrars.

The county unit system also serves effectively to minimize the Negro vote. Under the unit system, the populous urban counties—where Negroes are registered in large numbers—are virtually disfranchised in state-wide elections; and the rural counties—where few Negroes have been able to vote—hold the balance of power. Before the Negro vote can command much respect, either the county unit system must be beaten in the courts, or Negroes must manage to get themselves registered in significant numbers in the difficult back country.

Walden will have to direct the assault on these obstacles, but he takes a sanguine view of the future. As he sees it, the Negroes of Georgia are going to vote, and no amount of Talmadgeism or Kluxism is going to stop them. He finds the pattern of the future in those communities where Negroes have won a voice that no sensible office-seeker dares ignore. Politicians, he points out, are a flexible breed; "When the wind changes, they can flop over just like that."

As to a permanent "change of wind" in state politics, Walden is optimistic; it may come within five years, he says, certainly within ten. And what will become of Talmadge and his fellow white-supremacists? Walden smiles and flips his hand over: "They will have to find another issue."

—Harold C. Fleming

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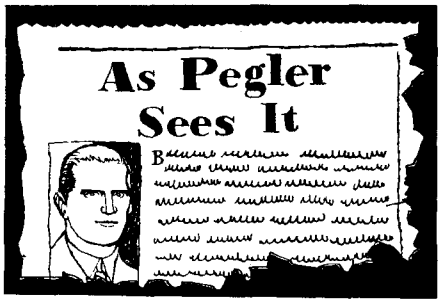
A Talk with Westbrook Pegler



His letter was short and to the point. "I mislaid your letter," he wrote, "and it has been nagging me all this time until I came upon it again today. I would have been very glad to co-operate with you. You are the first of a number of writers who have done jobs on me who observed the first rule of journalism. meet and interview the subject. . . ."

Having no desire to trouble the conscience of Westbrook Pegler, I immediately called to make an appointment.

I presented myself at the reception desk on the tenth floor of the Mirror Building on East 45th Street. The structure houses, among other Hearst affiliates, the King Features Syndicate, which circulates Pegler's columns. There were murals on the walls showing a selection of King Features stars in action: Donald Duck, Maggie and Jiggs, and Snuffy Smith. The receptionist led me down a flight of stairs to the ninth floor, where I was turned over to Pegler's secretary, Miss Maude Towart, a good-looking woman in a blue business suit.

She opened a door and I walked into a large, bright room—about thirty feet by fifteen—with a blue carpet, a formidable expanse of gray steel filing cabinets, a red leather sofa, two desks, and a table covered with books, magazines, and golf balls. At the desk in the corner of the room opposite the door, near the windows and the air-conditioning apparatus, sat Pegler. Removing his glasses, he rose, shook hands vigorously, and motioned me into the wooden chair in front of his desk.

The first thing you notice about Pegler is that he hardly resembles the boyish blond youth whose picture appears over his column. Pegler is amply proportioned, along the lines of an old police sergeant; he has a large, jowly face, thinning gray hair, and bushy eyebrows which, if they were darker and belonged to anyone else in the world, might be compared to those of John L. Lewis. It is a pleasant face, open and frank; his eyes are piercing blue. All during the interview he held his glasses at his side and looked straight at me; there was absolutely no guile or deviousness in his earnest, high-pitched voice. He wore blue galluses and a blue tie to go with his eyes, his carpet, and his secretary.

Without prompting, Pegler volunteered an opening. Pointing to an article on lynching in a magazine he had before him, he said, "I don't know why it's so hard to get across to people that the guys who shout about lynching the most are the damndest lynchers we've ever had. That dictionary over there [he pointed with his glasses to the table] defines lynching as 'inflicting punishment without due process of law.' There's a hundred times more lynching from union terrorism—"

I interrupted to say that I would like to ask some personal questions first. Somewhat disconsolately, he said, "Well, O.K., if they're not too personal." I asked him to describe his working habits.

"I work right here in the office or in a hotel room. Since I gave up my place in Connecticut a couple of years ago, I stay in a hotel while I'm in New York. Come to New York about the end of June and go back to my place in Arizona the middle of December, or maybe a month or so later. But I'm off on trips all the time—Washington, Boston, Pittsburgh, Albany. And then there's always the long-distance phone. Used to be we always went by hand after a story, but that's silly when you can use this thing." He pointed to the telephone hanging on the wall beside his desk.

Pegler writes five of his regular columns a week. They run about nine hundred words apiece, which he feels is too long. He also does a fictionalized "George Spelvin" piece for the Sunday papers. "But that's more in the nature of relaxation," he said. He writes on an old portable typewriter, which was on the desk before him as he spoke, and the actual writing takes him about an hour and a half for each day's "As Pegler Sees It." "Of course, that's just for the writing," he cautioned, "and says nothing about how long it takes me to gather the facts."

Pegler feels that the greatest reward a reporter gets out of his work is the maturity that comes from getting to know a lot of people. "As a reporter's experience widens, he gets to know people he can call on when he's doing a piece. What I always remember about Herbie Swope was his brashness that way. Why, Herbie Swope would belly up to anybody."

Nevertheless, Pegler himself isn't much of a joiner. "Used to belong to the Dutch Treat Club. Washington Press Club. That's about all." He is not a member of any veterans' organization. "For a long time the American Legion acted like awful damned fools. Parasites and hoodlums they were. The whole motive was to get pensions for a lot of cooks, bakers, and farriers. There

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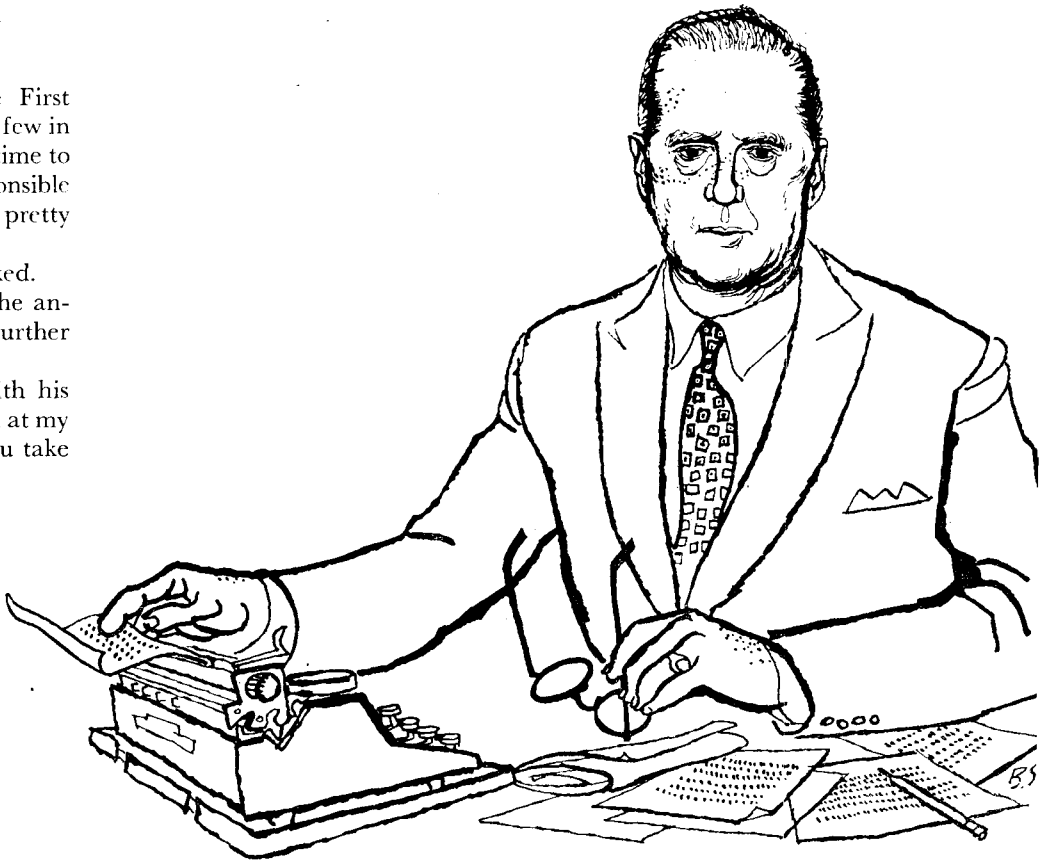
were few combat men in the First World War and correspondingly few in the Legion. It took them a long time to grow out of frivolity and irresponsible hoodlumism. But they seem to be pretty serious now."

"Are you a churchgoer?" I asked.

"I'm a Catholic," he said. The answer was final, and invited no further questioning on that line.

Suddenly Pegler fixed me with his bright blue eyes. He looked down at my notebook with interest. "Can you take shorthand?" he asked. I said that I couldn't, that I was simply writing as fast as I could, and that I had often thought of trying to learn. He nodded his head in agreement. "It's a good idea," he said. "I took it up for a while when I was a kid, but it's left me. We used to figure it scared the hen off the nest; the guy would clam up if he saw you taking notes. But I always take as many notes as I can. Responsible people want to be quoted correctly."



Westbrook Pegler

I asked him if he thought newspaper reporting had declined in enterprise and objectivity during recent years. "I don't mean to criticize their crap," he said, "but I know a case where a guy wrote some nasty things about a friend of mine. I called up my friend on the telephone and he said he'd never even talked to the guy. And the guy had written these evil, dirty things!"

Pegler doesn't think very much of the "off-the-record" dodge as used by government officials in Washington. "Sometimes they give you important background that way, but most of the time they use it for well-poisoning. A man should either say what he means or shut up. Now you take Henry Wallace. Why, he's the most naive slob that ever lived. He used to blab whole Cabinet meetings. Spend a little while with him to get his sympathy and the poor guy would spill his guts to you." The tone was one of amusement as well as disapproval.

Pegler has no theories on the development of his singular style of writing. "A writer doesn't set out to get a style just like that," he said. "You emulate other writers but not imitate them."

I asked him which writers he had emulated. "I used to like Philip Gibbs's stuff when I was a youngster. He was with the British armies then. His dispatches had a musical kind of a thing—with a lot of brass. It was like a wave on a beach. At the time I thought Mencken's stuff on the monkey trial was magnificent, but I looked it up a while ago and the savor's gone out of it. Mencken's a mischievous little guy. I always liked his impudence. I covered that monkey trial myself for the United News—that was the night side of U.P.—and I laid an egg."

He seemed to interrupt himself with a new thought. "Reporting and writing are two different things. People say Damon Runyon was a great reporter. But Damon was a writer, not a reporter. He just lived with the underworld until it was part of him. I don't mean Damon was a gangster, but that was all part of him. He wrote fine earthy, Western prose—without any vulgarity. Vulgarity," Pegler explained parenthetically, "is the product of New York night clubs."

I mentioned that the first time I read Thomas Carlyle I had immediately thought of Westbrook Pegler; Carlyle seemed to have the same quality of real anger when he wrote about what he considered to be injustice. Pegler seemed pleased. "That's pretty fast company," he said. "I write loud," he added seriously. "I'm probably less angry than I seem."

No one period of history appeals to Pegler more than another, and he has no favorite heroes from American history. "I don't know," he said, frowning a little. "I never thought about it that way. Right now is the most fateful period in history. We're in the worst crisis there's ever been. We stand to lose our country and our civilization." He painted a dark picture of the world situation; if the Russians meet with rebuffs in Europe they can turn to Asia. "We're inferior to Russia in power and potential," he said sadly, "and they have the initiative."

The subject seemed to depress Pegler, and he showed signs of impatience. "Can you snap this up? I've got to get upstairs to a meeting." I said that I had a few more questions and asked if I might call him again. "No, let's get through with it now." And he added a word of advice: "You've got all you need for a piece already."

He had another thought about the world situation. "Will South America throw in with us? There are very few true Caucasians among them. The

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barefoot natives aren't going to stake their lives with us."

Referring to some of his dispatches from Italy and Germany in the 1930's, I suggested that he had seen the shape of things to come better than some other correspondents at that time. Pegler received the praise modestly. "The other writers were very well aware of what was going on. They became wildly anti-fascist—but not anti-dictator. I've been anti-dictator all along."

Pegler obtained a visa for Russia during his brief visit to the continent at the time of the Olympic Games in 1936, but the Soviet Travel Agency tried to get him to pay for about forty dollars' worth of phone calls to Moscow which had been made to get final clearance for him. Pegler told them to go to hell and canceled his plans for a trip to Russia. He feels that the Russian Revolution was inevitable, and that the Kerensky government was a decent, moderate affair. "But we let that damned Trotsky slip out of our hands and the Germans sent Lenin back to Russia, and the world got the worst thing since Genghis Khan."

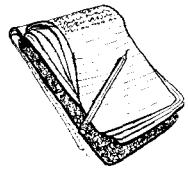
When asked if the United States could have stayed out of the Second World War, Pegler said wearily: "We should have stayed out of the first one. What if the Kaiser had won? Would his government have been any worse than what we've seen in Europe since? Oh, there were some social regulations about Jews and people like that. They couldn't marry into the court circle. Christ, *I* can't marry into the court circle, but I don't think *I'm* being persecuted." I asked him again about the Second World War. Much of the animation had gone out of his face. He said softly, "I figured the second one was coming up our street." Then he brightened a little. "But if our foreign policy had been different we could have stayed out. Ed Flynn and the Old Lady both let it slip out in their books that when F.D.R. sent Dodd of Chicago to Germany as ambassador—to spit in Goering's eye and then scream for American troops to come and bail him out—they all thought it was Dodds of Princeton. Hell, it could have been Dodd, Dodds, or Dodge. They didn't even know who the guy was."

Getting around finally to Pegler's favorite subject, I asked him what he thought the American laboring man ought to do to look after his legitimate interests. "It should all go back to the states," he said positively. "Let the states take care of it instead of the NLRB. They're local problems."

"You," he said, nodding vigorously at me, "you're a strong young fellow and you go down to the United States Employment Office and ask for a job. They'll tell you to join the Hod Carriers' Union and pay tribute to a lot of dirty racketeers. The Federal government forces you to do that. It's a denial of the liberties of citizens, and the state governments should protect you from the Federal government. I'm against dictators, no matter who."

He does not expect the new role James Byrnes is assuming in politics to improve the situation very much. "I'm afraid it's all pretty much of an afterthought on Jimmy's part," said Pegler skeptically. "He's pretty old now." A states'-rights movement based on an alliance between Southern Democrats and Republicans may do some good, however, Pegler thinks.

I asked him if there were any labor leaders he thought highly of. "Yeah, there's a guy down in Washington—I forget his name—I think he's in the Pattern Makers—Maude, what's that guy's name?" With Miss Towart's help, he remembered three labor leaders of whom he thinks highly.



Apparently Pegler himself does not violate "the first rule of journalism" which he mentioned in his letter. He has met Mrs. Roosevelt personally. "Sure, I met the Old Lady. Some years ago it was. We got along all right. It was 1935 or 1938, somewhere around 1937." He also knows Harold Ickes, William Greene, and John L. Lewis. His relations with Henry Wallace have not been cordial recently. "He won't talk to me any more," said Pegler, smiling. "He's a great guy in some ways—as a farmer, about some scientific things. And I guess he takes a great interest in esoteric matters. If he believes in oriental philosophies, why doesn't he say so? There's nothing wrong with it. Many great scholars are interested in oriental philosophies. But Old Bubblehead acts as if he's been caught giving candy to little girls." This time it almost seemed as if there were affection in his voice when he spoke of Wallace.

Pegler believes that there are agents of the Soviet Union occupying high positions of authority in our government. "Sure, no doubt about it," he said. "The resistance to the exposure of Communists proves it." He was silent for a while when I asked him what he believed to be the best way of combating Communism in this country. "One thing, it isn't an economic matter," he said finally. "That's for sure. Mrs. Roosevelt is always saying, 'Make the people prosperous and happy and they'll turn against Communism.' Alger Hiss was prosperous and happy," he added meaningfully, "and look at him. Look at Corliss Lamont. In terms of what you can get for your money the country has never been so prosperous. That's not the answer."

After a little more thought, his answer was sharp and brief, almost like a military command: "Shoot Communist traitors. Revive the treason law to cover a man who betrays his country in time of peace as well as in time of war. Prosecute Lee Pressman, Nathan Witt, and all these guys who refuse to say whether they're Communists 'lest they tend to incriminate themselves.'" He spoke the phrase contemptuously. "*I* don't say they're Communists. But why the hell don't *they* say they're not?"

But he would not prosecute Whittaker Chambers. "No, he did more than turn state's evidence. He had a genuine change of heart. How much more have you got there?"

I said that I had just one more question and asked him how he would combat Communism in the world at large. The question did not seem to interest Pegler much. "England's going Communist. They're all going. Socialism is the first step. And we've given them such a head start." He began picking up papers on his desk and seemed anxious to bring the interview to an end. But I pressed the question: "How can we combat Communism abroad?" Answering questions and talking for over an hour seemed to have tired him; he looked straight at me with his clear blue eyes and made no attempt to evade the final question.

"I don't know," he said. "I don't know how to do it."

—Robert K. Bingham

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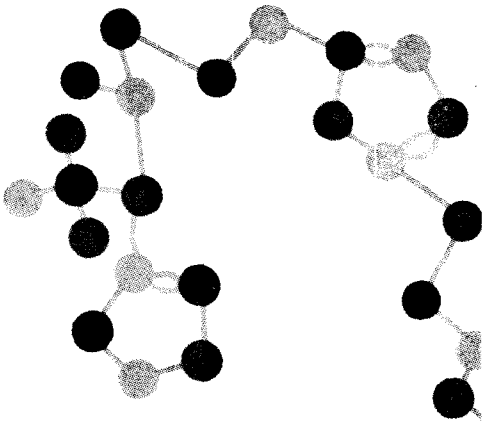
An Offensive Against Atomic Insecurity



The transition from relative security to absolute insecurity in the last few months is shaking western society to its foundations. The structural supports of our civilization are here and there becoming visible. We are getting back to fundamentals, and it may be—it just may be—that we shall find hope there.

Only yesterday we were basking in the illusion of security. If the Russians started anything, we thought, all we had to do was drop a few atomic bombs. Even if the Russians developed the bomb (and we persuaded ourselves it would take years), we would probably always have more bombs than they.

Then came the President's announcement that an atomic explosion had taken place in the Soviet Union. But this was only prologue. Before we could get adjusted to the horrible possibilities of dying by the hundred thousands (atomic fission) we were asked to contemplate the hydrogen bomb—death by the several millions (atomic fusion).

This time, our scientists quickly told us that the Russians already knew how to make the hydrogen bomb. General Groves and the FBI told us that the German-British scientist-spy, Dr. Klaus Fuchs, probably passed our secrets to Soviet agents in 1947. We know now that we share the dread secrets of atomic fission and atomic fusion with the Soviet dictatorship which openly seeks our ruin.

In the face of this physical force that we unleashed, and that now threatens to destroy us, many of us have invoked moral force. Senator Tydings has called for a worldwide disarmament conference, Senator Pepper for strengthening the U.N., Senator McMahon for a fifty-billion-dollar world economic development and information program. One group of scientists has called for an end to economic warfare, another for a pledge never to use the bomb except in retaliation. Most of these proposals have an unstated common denominator: They spring from a moral disquiet, a vague sense of guilt that we, who consider ourselves a moral people, created this Thing, that we used it, and far worse, that we were complacent about using it again.

The sense of guilt extends further: Most of the people of the world are hungry, but we have used a great new source of energy almost wholly for purposes of destruction. The people of the world want peace, but we are embarked upon a colossal arms race.

The Christian background of our western civilization is revealed in our new tendency not to justify ourselves on the grounds of the greater guilt of the Russians, but to look to our own faults. There are some among us who still think exclusively in terms of stockpiles of bombs, scientific secrets, tighter security control, and an armament race. But there are many today who are thinking of how evil can be overcome with good.

There is hope in this attitude, but there is also danger.

Secretary Acheson dealt with the danger in a press conference on February 8. The danger is that the rulers of the Soviet state are unscrupulous, amoral men whose philosophy is that of absolute power, and it is futile to think that security by agreement is possible.

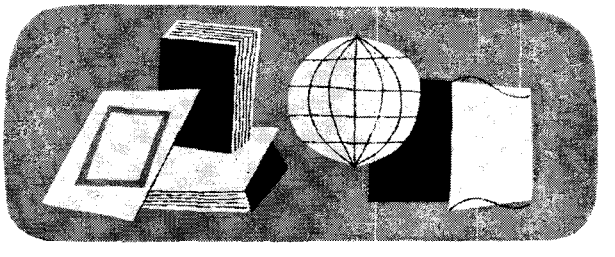
To allow our sense of our own shortcomings to lead us to disarmament, by agreement or otherwise, would be dangerous. The Soviet dictators respect only physical force, and we must therefore have physical force.

It would be even more dangerous, however, to fail to see in this crisis that we need moral force too. This is only another way of saying, as did Secretary Acheson, that we should "create strength instead of the weakness which exists in many quarters." Our main effort should be directed toward agreement, not with the Soviet rulers, but with the hundreds of millions of human beings they hold in their power, and with the hundreds of millions whose fate hangs in the balance.

Senator McMahon on February 2 stated the moral problem: "When the atom was split for destruction during the recent war, a transcendent moral problem came into being; and the responsibility for moral leadership on an equal order of magnitude rested upon us, since we had made the first bomb . . . It is my intense conviction that our decision, born of necessity, to build the hydrogen bomb must be accompanied by the immediate initiation of a moral crusade for peace having far greater potential effect than any physical weapon, even chunks of the sun."

A moral crusade at this extreme hour? Why?

Not for escapism. Not because of sentimentality or tradition. But because the wisdom of the ages tells us



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that moral power is stronger than physical power.

"Power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely." In the four years that we in the United States thought we were masters of absolute physical power, we were corrupted—and weakened. Most of us succumbed to the intellectual indolence that inevitably accompanies absolute power and that, in the end, undoes those who rely wholly upon it.

Today, without delusions, we are obliged to face squarely these facts:

In a contest engaged in on terms of physical power alone, the outcome would be very much in doubt.

If we are to gain an edge in this contest, we must have more than atomic and military power. We must exploit to the fullest the assets that we, as free, moral, self-governing men have that the dictators do not have.

First, we must develop dynamic military conceptions and stimulate scientific development and invention as a whole. Our scientists have been telling us that for technological advance there must be free interchange of ideas, government promotion of scientific development and invention on a broad scale, and a minimum of security control.

Free nations suffer many disadvantages in competing with the totalitarian. But the open scientific mind, uninhibited experimentation, the stimulus of full exchange of ideas—these are powerful advantages possessed only by free men and free nations. We can, if we will, focus all of our best minds on the rapidly changing problems of military strategy, military defense, and military weapons, whereas in the U.S.S.R. decisions are made by a handful of men on the basis of limited intelligence, and are reversed with great difficulty.

Democracies cannot play the game of secrecy. They can keep secrets only from themselves and their friends. Their enemies have ways of getting around security barriers and stealing specific secrets, as the melancholy case of Dr. Fuchs demonstrates.

We should offer all countries, including the Soviet Union, complete and reciprocal openness in scientific and technical matters. If the Soviet Union declines, as it is almost certain to do, then we should institute openness with regard to all free nations. Security control vis-à-vis the Soviet Union should be limited to *weapons,* and should not be allowed to retard scientific development and invention as a whole in the free world.

Second, we must start a challenging competition with the U.S.S.R. in the development of the world's resources for the welfare of mankind rather than for its destruction.

Soviet propagandists are telling the world hourly that we are concerned only with the destructive potentialities of atomic energy. They have challenged us—but only in words. We should respond with deeds. We should propose to the United Nations a broad plan for the establishment of atomic-energy centers in the United States, western Europe, Asia, and even the U.S.S.R., for harnessing atomic reactions to human need, offering at the same time to make available immediately all the information we have about controlling and adapting atomic reactions.

Our efforts should not be confined to that. Most of the world could vastly

increase its productivity right now through better and wider use of human energy, of motor power, of electrical energy. A worldwide attack on poverty should be carried through on a scale usually reserved for war. Our purpose must be to help our fellow men toward well-being: to "create strength around the world instead of weakness"—physical strength *plus* moral strength. This is the only way to stop the spread of Communism from country to country.

It would be nullifying to make our action in this respect contingent upon "agreement" with the Soviet Union to reduce armaments. We should go ahead with it because we know it is right, because we know it will create strength.

Third, we must build all possible moral, psychological, and legal barriers against the use of atomic weapons.

At various times in our history moral and legal restraints have given some protection against frightfulness in war: in feudal times, chivalry; in the last century, international law; during the past war, restraints (based upon the treaty of 1922, reinforced by fear of reprisal) against the use of poison gas in war. Mutual restraints, based upon fear of reprisal, might be erected for atomic weapons, similar to that which proved effective for poison gas—which even Hitler respected.

The Soviet Union has proposed in the United Nations an agreement "outlawing" atomic weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, but has thus far refused to agree to any effective control. In the United States there has been some support for "outlawing" the atomic bomb, on the part of muddle-headed people who do not see that to "outlaw" anything or anybody there is required first a law and then a superior power capable of enforcing it. However, many clear-thinking people today believe that an international agreement not to use atomic weapons *except in retaliation* might be a real gain. They consider it would be foolhardy to accept anything less than international ownership and control (the Baruch proposals) over the manufacture and possession of atomic materials, but that agreement not to *use* atomic energy for destructive purposes might develop into a substantial restraint.

The pledged word of Soviet dictators is worthless. But a self-denying agreement of this nature would emphasize continuously to all peoples, including the people of the Soviet Union, that breaking the agreement would result in immediate retaliation. It would formally mobilize fear of reprisal in support of pledge-keeping. With the passage of time it might grow into a habit and a moral restraint. Such an

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agreement would not interfere with our preparedness *or with any military action we would be likely to take.*

No western democratic government could or would invite civilian destruction at home by being the first to use atomic weapons abroad, and a policy that assumes the contrary is ill-founded. Neither the American people nor the people of Europe would want it or allow it. Our leadership in the world, the solidity of our alliances, and our support by free peoples all over the world would be enhanced by an agreement not to use atomic weapons except in retaliation. We can retain leadership only if the world trusts us to be just, and fears only our just retaliation for wrongdoing. Our position of now threatening to visit atomic destruction upon the world in retaliation for *any kind* of Soviet military aggression has the fatal element of immorality that makes it a weakness rather than a strength. It makes the world fear our injustice, not our justice.

Fourth, we must mobilize the intangible forces of religion, democracy, and international good faith.

We have yet to consider our greatest power. That force is the latent knowledge in every heart and mind—including those behind the Iron Curtain—that all men are brothers, and that hatred, brutality, and dishonesty in human relations are not acceptable substitutes for love, gentleness, and good faith.

The Soviet challenge today is much more than a military challenge, or an economic challenge, or an atomic challenge. It is a challenge to the basis of our present civilization itself.

Religion, science, and common sense have discovered that malice, hatred, dishonesty, breach of faith—uncontrolled passions of any sort—produce discord and misery, while their opposites produce happiness and harmony. The world's great religions—Buddhism, Confucianism, Mohammedanism, Christianity, Judaism—all have enshrined this refined product of human wisdom in moral codes. Today science proves and sustains it, embodying it in psychological laws. Yet the Soviet dictators are ignorant and arrogant enough to try to organize society on the basis of lying, strife, and brutality.

President Roosevelt in 1939 described the totalitarian challenge as a challenge to the three institutions indispensable to Americans and all free men everywhere—a challenge to religion, democracy, and international good faith:

"Religion, by teaching man his relationship to God, gives the individual a sense of his own dignity and teaches him to respect himself by respecting his neighbors.

"Democracy, the practice of self-government, is a covenant among free men to respect the rights and liberties of their fellows.

"International good faith, a sister of democracy, springs from the will of civilized nations of men to respect the rights and liberties of other nations of men.

"The defense of religion, of democracy and of good faith among nations is all the same fight. To save one we must now make up our minds to save all."

Walter Lippmann called these words "a landmark in the history of western thought" because they marked the end of the long conflict between democracy and religion. It is understandable why this conflict developed, but the reasons for it are no longer valid.

Many hundreds of years ago in Europe, organized religion—the Church—was captured by and put at the service of monarchial or autocratic government. The growing democratic movements of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries found it necessary to defy not only autocracy but the Church. Modern democracy in Europe and America—dating from two centuries ago—has been not only secular, but to a degree positively anti-religious. This has served to obscure almost wholly the common taproot of democracy and religion. This taproot is being revealed only now that it is being hacked at so viciously by today's totalitarians.

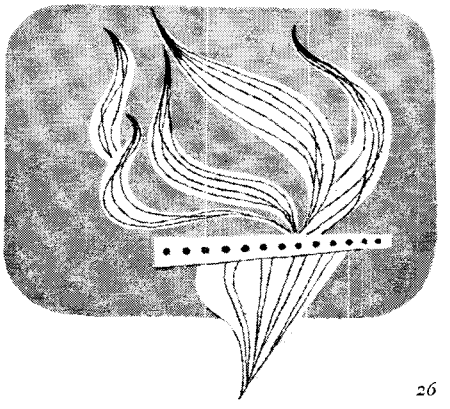
In the past we tried to rally free men with the cry of freedom and democracy. We have been only partially successful, for these concepts do not have universal validity or meaning. We should rally them instead around the simple values and principles that underlie religion, and that nourish democracy and international good faith. These have validity in all nations. They must dominate individual, national, and international life if we are to have a permanent peace.

This means leading the way to a spiritual revival as a part of our campaign against Communism and atomic destruction. It means enlisting the support not only of nations and groups, but of the individuals who make up nations, including those tens of millions now under the Soviet heel.

The project for spiritual revival should be organized and carried on by political and spiritual leaders working in concert. It should be first organized on a national scale in the free countries. Then the campaign should be organized on an international scale, and finally, it should be projected into the totalitarian countries by means of a great international propaganda drive and underground activity.

Religious undergrounds already exist in the U.S.S.R. and in central Europe. They should be strengthened, encouraged, and vastly expanded. Totalitarianism must be fought and vanquished where it is weakest: in the minds and hearts of men.

The very foundation of Soviet power will tremble the day we unleash against it the techniques, and a fraction of the zeal, used by the early Christians against the power of ancient Rome. That day will come. It can be hastened—perhaps arriving this side of atomic war—if free men will direct their political and religious leaders to work together, employing their full power toward that end. —JOSEPH M. JONES



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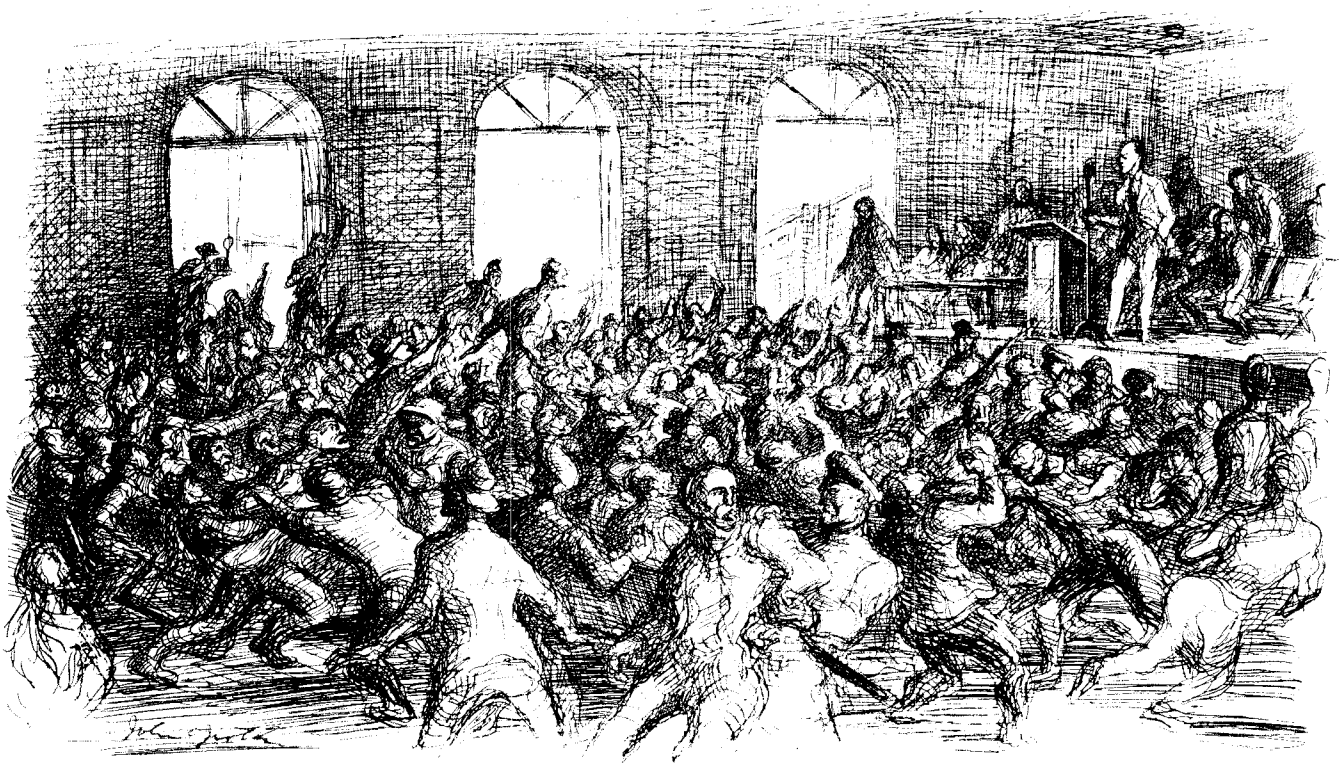

Joe Curran: Seaman in Deep Water

Once 'the most fiercely independent union in the world,' his N.M.U. has beaten down the Reds—at the expense of its own democracy

On the eve of last Thanksgiving, the American Radio Association, CIO, flashed a message to the crews of all American ships at sea. "Communist revolution in National Maritime Union began Wednesday," it announced. "Red fascists besieging New York NMU building . . . assaulting officers and attempting capture union . . . on your arrival New York request time off to attend grandmothers' funerals. After burying old lady, come down to defend union hall against commie storm troopers . . ."

The message went out after an SOS to the radio operators from Joseph Curran, president of the CIO seamen's union. On almost a thousand American tankers, "rustbuckets," and passenger liners, plying the ocean lanes from Curaçao to Yokohama and the Tasmanian Sea, ships' crews met to discuss the news. Resolutions poured into the union hall. A few men jumped ship and took passage home.

During the next few weeks, the union's modern six-story building on West 17th Street was in a state of siege. Violence broke out intermittently. Goon squads roamed through Chelsea and Greenwich Village, and in the seamen's favorite ginmills—the Anchorage, the Remo, the Majestic—men sat watchfully, their faces to the door.

When the story dropped off the front pages, newspaper readers generally assumed that the case was closed. It seemed clear-cut: The Communists had made a putsch for control of the NMU, and failed.

But there were some tantalizing loose ends. For example, it was not clear what the Communists had hoped to gain. Their power on the waterfront had been broken decisively two years before, and their influence among seamen had never been lower. How could they muster forces strong enough to arouse such alarm among the union's officials? Still more curious, how was it that some of the rebel leaders were the very men who had led the fight to destroy the Communist machine only a short time ago? The answers are a study in the self-destruction of a union—and a warning to the whole labor movement.

Although the NMU has only forty-seven thousand members, it has been a key Communist concentration point for many years. In few unions do Communists constitute such a danger to

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national security—for, as Curran said in 1938, "Some day this union will be in a position to say when and where [the U.S. government] will ship arms and ammunition from this country."

But in the NMU the temptation to fight the Communists with their own tactics has been great. The union which started with the rawest form of democracy is now swinging to the other extreme. "When you're picking up a handful of razor blades," an NMU official remarked, "you have to wear iron gloves." He was implying that a union cannot root out Communists without giving up its democratic principles. The NMU experience raises a further question: Does the sacrifice of democratic principles to root out the Communists really do so in the long run?

Until modern unionism developed, Jack London's death-wagons were all the sailor knew—inedible food, intolerable quarters, slave wages, and merciless laws against mutiny. "They can't put me in a smaller room than I've always lived in," said the AFL's great maritime leader, Andrew Furuseth, when threatened with jail for organizing. "They can't give me plainer food than I've always eaten; they can't make me lonelier than I've always been."

The sailors first achieved a semblance of union organization in 1895, with the formation of the International Seamen's Union, AFL. But under its rule the average seaman's wage was fifty-five dollars a month; and he was hired either through the hated "shape-up" and "piece-off" (hiring done from a crowd on the pier for kickbacks from wages) or through the "crimp joints" (boarding houses that shanghaied men onto ships). For years seamen tried to get a better deal through the ISU. They were "dumped" (beaten up), murdered, and blacklisted.

Then, in 1937, an unknown sailor named Joe Curran, whose only home ashore was a park bench, and whose only proven leadership assets at the time were murderous fists and an impregnable jaw, walked off the *S.S. California* and "hit the bricks." Thousands of seamen followed him in a general strike that is now glorious in the memory of the union. Twenty-seven men were killed, and hundreds injured, but today, when, for all the comparative ease of their lives, these men are caught in the maze of sophisticated unionism, they look back wistfully at the 1936 strike as the purest thing seamen ever had.

By the time the next strike occurred in 1937, the seamen were ready to form the NMU. The men who founded it had developed a moral code of their own: To have been "in and out of the can" for union activity was the highest form of morality; to accept police discipline, depraved. A seaman's hatred of the shipowner must never waver; any union leader could become a double-crosser and had to be watched like a hawk; the rank and file was omniscient, omnipotent, and invincible.

The first-elected President, variously referred to as "Ham-head," "The Pope," and "Bull of the Woods," was Joe Curran. His chief lieutenants were: M. Hedley Stone, a small, frost-bitten man with a Napoleon complex; Frederick "Blackie" Myers, the left wing's most personable and exuberant spokesman; "Silver-Tongue" Jack Lawrenson, a brilliant orator and tactician; Howard McKenzie, Ferdinand Smith, and Charlie Keith.

In the years to come, these men were to become Communists, ex-Communists, anti-Communists, and ex-anti-Communists. At the first NMU convention, however, they were passionately united. They would fight the shipowners. They would wipe out the shape-up, the piece-off, the crimp joint, by establishing rotary (seniority) shipping through their own hiring halls. They would build what the Maritime Commission called "the most fiercely independent [union] in the world."

In the first year, a group called the "Mariners Club" rode to power on an anti-Communist platform. Shortly afterward, they were exposed as paid agents of the shipping companies. The shock turned seamen to the one group whose hatred for the shipowners seemed indisputable: the Communist Party. By 1939, the party had control.

Economically, it brought many blessings. The hiring hall was firmly established; wages rose from fifty-five to $164 a month; and conditions aboard ship improved beyond measure. Politically, the Communists inflicted a blight from which the union has never recovered. At first, the rank and file sternly ruled its officers. (In those days, Curran was forbidden to lock his desk or office door; and once he threatened to resign before he won the right to hire his own secretary.) Nevertheless, the "hacks" (as Communist Party members came to be called) gradually got a death grip on union affairs. By 1939, all the men listed above (with the possible exception of Curran) were in the party. This was to have a double bearing on the union's future. It gave these man an intimate understanding of party techniques, making it easier to destroy the machine when the time came. But it also taught them how to pervert democratic union principles, usually a habit-forming practice.

As long as international Communist policy roughly matched the seamen's needs, the party's reign was unchallenged. But after Russia got into the war, the battle lines began to form. "Whatever beefs we had," one member says, "the hacks told us 'no beef—

Charlie Keith and Jack Lawrenson

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there's a war on.' In negotiations, they gave up things we'd had for years. And towards the end, Blackie Myers even told us we should make a permanent no-strike pledge after the war."

There was little ideology involved in the final revolt against party control. It came about largely because seamen felt the Communists had betrayed their trade-union interests. The rebellion began within the party itself. A hate list published by the *Daily Worker* enumerated the men who were either drummed out of the party or resigned from it around 1945. Except for McKenzie, Myers, and Smith, every man of the original general staff was named; and when the "Rank and File Caucus" was formed to break the party machine at the 1947 convention, Joe Curran was its symbolic leader, and Jack Lawrenson and Charlie Keith were its chairman and secretary.

The caucus program—to "exterminate the Communist machine" and restore to the NMU its original militant policies—was completely successful; the anti-Communist slate, headed by Curran, Lawrenson, Stone, and Duffy, won by better than three to one.

But the union's trials weren't over. Simultaneously with the Communist purge, the maritime industry went into decline. The number of seagoing vessels had dropped from a peak of 3,500 in 1947 to 1,200. By the winter of 1948-1949, almost half the NMU's membership was "on the beach." Shipowners began to "chisel," cutting manning scales, stalling on overtime payments, sitting tight on wage increases, and, what infuriated the seamen most, systematically transferring their ships to Panamanian registry to avoid hiring Americans at American wage scales. On top of all this, the NLRB, under the Taft-Hartley law, outlawed hiring halls in the Great Lakes region.

This was the real test for the new Curran administration. The "hacks" could be counted on to raise a strident voice against the "capitalist exploiters, imperialists, and warmongers" who were throwing seamen out of work. But few seamen would pay much attention so long as the administration fought the union's battle vigorously.

It is impossible for an outsider to judge fairly whether, given the handicaps it was facing, the Curran administration did the best it could. Hundreds

Dave Drummond

of interviews with rank and filers, however, establish that in the Port of New York, which represents half the NMU membership and is crucial to the functioning of the national office, there was a surge of discontent and suspicion.

There were charges that no organizing was being done; that beefs were not being settled; that quickie strikes to enforce contracts were being suppressed on national orders.

Stunned by the apparent transformation in the Curran they had known, the rank and file blamed it on the rarefied political atmosphere in which he was now moving. They asserted that his political commitments to Truman were sapping his militancy and embarrassing him in the hiring-hall campaign; that his overzealous support of the Marshall Plan and the Atlantic Pact was smothering justifiable "job action" (strikes); that he had become so engrossed with fighting Communists that he was forgetting to fight the shipowners. It was natural for seamen to regard strikes, with all their implications of "militant unionism," as the best answer to their troubles. But to Curran, now moving in the top political echelons, striking a Marshall Plan cargo ship was no laughing matter. He was facing the almost identical dilemma the Communists had faced during the war. The "hacks" had been driven into a corner, and the seamen had driven them from power. Was Curran adroit enough to avoid the same fate?

As conditions steadily worsened on the waterfront, Curran declared that the numerous unauthorized strikes, the restlessness and suspicion, were wholly Communist-inspired. But the New York members, who had amply demonstrated their anti-Communist sentiments, made it clear they did not agree with him.

Whether because he believed they were wrong, or feared they were right, Curran moved to clamp down. In the spring of 1949, he introduced a resolution before the national council to deny membership in the NMU to: "any individuals who subscribe to, support, or otherwise follow a course of action consistent with and demonstrating membership in or adherence to the policy of the Communist Party or any other similar subversive or totalitarian doctrine, and who commit anti-union acts such as, *but not limited to,* participating in, inspiring, uttering, writing or distributing untrue, and false statements against the NMU, its officers and membership" and who "join together with or are members of anti-union groups or factions within the NMU which are *subject to direction or participation* by such subversive elements . . ."

To "deny membership" in the NMU, in effect, is to bar a seaman from work. Yet rarely has a formal attempt to exclude Communists been so loosely worded, and so comprehensive as to suppress not only Communists, but any opposition to any policies of a union administration.

The case of Oscar Inniss shows the danger in this. In May, 1949, Inniss shipped on the *S.S. Thornton Lykes* as chief steward, and "kept after the cooks [because] the crew complained about the food." The cooks then told the union patrolman: "Inniss is a hack." He was expelled in Galveston. Later the port agent, Tex George, a Curran man, investigated and found Inniss completely innocent. But Inniss was kept out of the maritime industry for more than a year before his case came to the national convention.

Had Curran not submitted his resolution, it is doubtful whether the subsequent crisis would ever have occurred. At one stroke, he solidified the New York membership into a hostile group who believed the resolution was aimed directly at their sacred rank-and-file right to oppose.

In accordance with the constitution, the resolution went to a referendum under supervision of the Honest Ballot Association, an independent vote-counting outfit. Irregularities in voting

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were so universal that the H. B. A. threw the vote out entirely. The resolution was dead until the September, 1949, convention.

There were three mutually hostile groups at the convention. One, the "Voice of the Membership," represented the Communists and their satellites. Another was the pro-Curran group, largely from the ports outside of New York. The third was a newly formed "Independent Caucus," representing almost the entire New York membership and opposing both the Communist and Curran "machines." Its leaders were Jack Lawrenson and Charlie Keith.

Against steady New York opposition, Curran was able to get two significant constitutional amendments passed: One was a ban on future admittance of Communists into the union, and the other decreed expulsion for "violation of National Shipping Rules, Constitution, or *policies* of the Union." (A "policy," in the NMU, can mean anything from a constitutional proviso to personal decisions of the national officers.) He also secured a crucial "policy" resolution (requiring only a simple majority) providing expulsion for any member "issuing, distributing or mailing literature that slanders, vilifies or discredits the union, its members or officials." Together, these clauses could prevent anyone from even running an opposition slate in union elections.

The convention ended with Curran's hand strengthened. The decisions heading for a membership referendum were framed in a broad anti-Communist setting which was bound to win agreement from the overwhelming majority of the members. The clauses giving Curran his greatest powers appeared unobtrusively in a list of thirty-five otherwise-innocuous amendments running to eight closely printed pages. The referendum was later supported *in toto* by a five-to-one vote.

Curran was now prepared to close in on New York. On September 30, he notified Drummond, the elected port agent, that Vice-President Hulbert Warner (an ex-Communist) was appointed as administrator, with full authority, over Drummond and the Port of New York. Drummond replied that as no membership approval had been asked or given for Warner's appointment, the move was unconstitutional, and he would refuse to recognize it.

On October 6, the New York membership met and heard a biting report from their convention delegates. It charged Curran with restoring all the old abuses for which the rank and file had thrown the "hacks" out of office, and with failing entirely to handle vital "pork-chop" issues. It was adopted by a vote of 1,123 to 154.

The meeting then rejected the Warner appointment by a large vote.

Contrary to rule and tradition, the *NMU Pilot* (the union paper) did not publish these decisions. Since the beginning of November it has printed a total of eight lines on the New York membership's views on the matter.

On October 20, the New York membership met again, and restated its former position.

On November 9, Drummond preferred charges against Curran, accusing him of depriving the membership of its fundamental rights to elect officers and determine union policy. Contrary to the constitution, Curran has ignored these charges.

On November 14, Warner fired Drummond and fourteen elected New York patrolmen. At this point, open

Joseph Curran

rioting broke out in the union hall. Curran says it was a "commie stormtrooper" assault against the national officers barricaded on the sixth floor. The Independent Caucus says it was the New York membership, which occupies the floors below, "mobilizing to guard its own union property and funds." Whether or not the Communists organized it, they certainly did everything possible to inflame the situation, importing their disciples from other unions and raising general hell.

On November 17, a Federal Court ordered Curran to stop interfering with Drummond in the performance of his functions. That night, as Drummond walked onto the platform of the membership meeting to serve Curran with the court order, he was seized, on Curran's orders, and forcibly removed.

The New York *Times* report of that meeting said: "After many efforts to . . . gain order . . . a show of hands vote was taken and Mr. Curran was named chairman amid a swelling roar of voices. Mr. Warner said the vote was 2700 to 2200, but police said the total crowd at that time was between 2000 and 2500. For twenty minutes there were cries of 'We want Keith.' Several eggs cut parabolas across the hall. . . . A detective was hit by a flying piece of broken chair."

On the morning of November 25, seamen arriving at the union hall found a cordon of police around the building. All doors were barred save one. Identifiable anti-Curran men who attempted to enter the hall had their membership books snatched, and were then beaten up in a back room. Herman Cooper, the NMU's attorney, has said that forty-six books were taken in this manner. (After intervention by the American Civil Liberties Union, they were returned.) Rioting raged for several days, and then subsided. The union hall was secure in the Curran faction's hands.

This, in bare outline, is the story of the Thanksgiving Uprising. At subsequent meetings in New York, the membership sat silently under pro-Curran chairmanship, with police lining the walls. In any open balloting the great majority did not vote at all.

The clean-up proceeded methodically. Drummond and the fourteen patrolmen were formally removed from office, and several insurgents, including Keith, were expelled. Open violence is tending to subside, although only a few weeks ago, Curran men armed with blackjacks and fountain-pen tear-gas guns attacked an opposition meeting and shortly thereafter attempted to break into Lawrenson's home.

Today, the most pervasive note in the NMU is fear. In an important sense, the union is an employment agency.

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Loss of a union book means loss of a job; and rank and filers widely assume that no man's job is safe today unless, whatever his private opinions, he conforms to the administration's views.

It is a numbing experience for many seamen, whose talent for raw, lusty, free-spoken unionism was once unparalleled in the labor movement. Curran's supporters contend that, unfortunately, this is the price a union must pay to destroy Communists. It is the most tragic commentary on this policy that quite the opposite is proving true. When Curran began his campaign, the Communist influence on the waterfront was comparatively negligible, and the opposition in the Port of New York outnumbered the Communists by far. The result of Curran's onslaught has been that the Communists and ex-anti-Communists have joined forces.

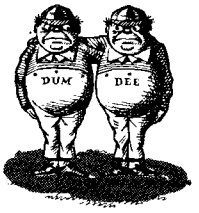
In January, after Curran had publicly urged the membership to see to it that there be no opposition slate in the forthcoming spring elections, the Independent Caucus and the Voice of the Membership joined forces to fight him. It is a weird coalition—probably the only one extant where Communists and ex-Communists work together—and loaded with suspicion on both sides. But the result will undoubtedly be a strengthening of the party's battered waterfront forces. For, except in the small, earnest, but leaderless "Committee for Democratic Unionism," the seamen have no middle way. Those who can't stomach the Communists at any price are going over to Curran. But others are going back to the party they once deserted in disgust.

Immobilized by such devastating factionalism, the union, built against such great odds and with such great hopes, is facing destruction. The shipowners are hacking away at seamen's wages and working conditions. Unemployment is mounting. It is only a matter of weeks before the hiring hall will be outlawed in New York. Unless there is an unexpected display of statesmanship on all sides, the chances of saving the cherished rotary-shipping system are slim. This is a bleak prospect for men who had believed the crimp joint, the shape-up, and the piece-off were all behind them. To the overwhelming majority of rank and filers, this will be the bitterest epilogue to the NMU story.

—Claire Neikind

Blessing in Disguise

The bright side of the British election



In the biggest British vote of all time, a shrewd and sensible electorate has told both Labourites and Conservatives to find a common ground for common sense. In a poll that brought out some eighty-four per cent of the eligible voters, the Communists got nowhere. (There were about as many Communist votes as there are party members in Britain—some ninety thousand.) The Socialist extremists and fellow travelers were swept out of Parliament. The "straight" Labourites got a minority of the votes cast, but a majority of six Parliamentary seats out of 624. The Conservatives failed by sixteen seats to get a majority. The obstinate Liberals (whom everybody has been sentencing to limbo for a generation, but who won't lie down and die) got nine of the twelve seats they had held before, and a slightly increased number of votes. Out of the total vote of 28.8 million the anti-Socialists got 15.4 million—12.5 million for the Tories, and 2.6 million for the Liberals. As P. G. Wodehouse might say, the lock couldn't be deader.

The results can be summed up thus: Britain has no proletariat—only an upper and lower bourgeoisie; Britain wants no more "statism," nationalization, or Marxist dogma; Britain does not want a coalition (both parties were, and are, firmly against that); Britain is coming to rest, as it ordinarily does, around the dead center of the principal party programs.

Whatever happens, and whenever another election comes, some party will get a *working* majority, but it will be small. That party had better not call its opponents "vermin," and "not worth a tinker's cuss," as the wildcat Socialists, Aneurin Bevan and Emanuel Shinwell, did before the election. For such an electorate—kept informed through crises during ten years of war and peace by press and BBC and party propaganda—fanatical extremisms are out. The new Government simply has to buckle down for the common weal—not for class, group, or vested interests.

The election results prove that the ancient British political process—arrested by the war and by the wild relief of 1945—got going again during Labour's cocksure, party-minded administration of the last five years. The process in question is that of junking extremists and whittling down the two main parties until they're disputing a narrow common ground. Such were the past roles of Whigs and Tories, Liberals and Conservatives; such—when they are at their best—are Republicans and Democrats, and the two main parties in every British Dominion. This is the Anglo-Saxon legacy to democracy, as contrasted with the Latin and Teutonic practice of backing numerous splinter-groups in an unstable parliamentary system.

Today in Britain, Mr. Herbert Morrison is cooing at the decisive floating vote of the 2.6 million Liberals, and crowing over the rout of the Communists and their fellow travelers inside Labour. Winston Churchill and Lord Woolton are doing the same, thunderously backed up by *The Times* (which spoke of the "spattering of the electoral map" by 478 Liberal candidates as "irresponsible" and "a grave disservice" amounting to a political crime).

The fact is that all the party-wires in Britain have gotten crossed. Tories and Socialists are no more—though they may not know it yet—just as Whigs and Tories are no more. These are no longer true political divisions

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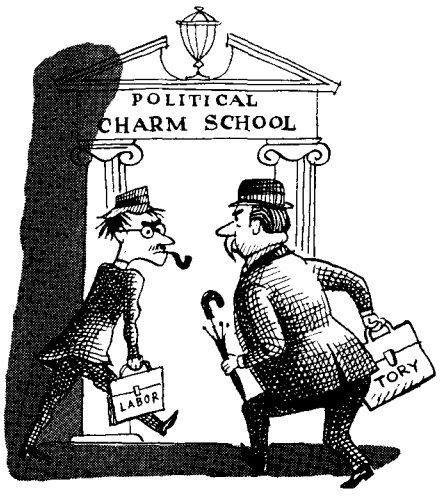

of the British people. When you've cut Marxist extremism out of British Socialism, and when you've excised right-wing reaction out of the Conservative Party, you are left with two somewhat naked-looking, shamefaced, and remarkedly similar bodies. And to tell them apart—and *both* of them apart from their odd Liberal counterpart in the middle—is almost impossible.

Herein lies the clue to what will yet unfold in Britain. The people want a truce to derisive, and divisive, party—and class—bickering. They want honest, firm, realistic grappling with Britain's long-run problems. They want to know what's really up. They want open consultation. And they don't mind—if all that is granted to them—making sacrifices. How could they ensure all this? By simply putting both Socialists and Conservatives back with equal powers. It is a wonderful warning to party politicians.

In a matter of weeks a budget must be presented and passed—or Britain will have no pay for its armed forces, and the Constitution will crack. But before that can be done, the estimates for the 1950-1951 fiscal year (beginning in April) must be published. The estimates must include deficiency sums for the health service, defense, etc., for 1949-1950; some hard financial facts—kept back before the election—are bound to come out. Further nationalization—even that of iron and steel—can be ruled out, but there are a host of problems which cannot wait on party maneuvering, and the electorate will scold Government and Opposition impartially if either of them indulges in that. Thus, with all eyes on the possibility of another election, both parties will behave well.

Contrary to the general opinion, I believe this Parliament will last far longer than anyone thinks; and for the reason that both parties *will* behave well. I seriously believe Britain may have gotten by accident just what it needs: a co-operative Government without a coalition; an agreed set of measures, passed without bitter debate or divisions, planned by both parties beforehand, reflecting the best intentions of the best brains in the middle ground of British politics. If this goes on for six months—as it must—or for one year, everybody may find that it does exactly what *everybody*—except the reactionary Blimps and the wildcat Socialists—wants done.

There may be a conspiracy to keep this Parliament—which meets under sentence of death—obstinately and protractedly alive. As Charles II said to his brother, when the latter warned him against assassins: "They'll never kill me, James, to make *you* King!" Britishers may prefer the compulsory common sense of this Parliament to a backslide into such an administrative tangle as we had in the past five years—or, indeed, between the wars.

There is no dispute between the parties in Britain on defense and foreign policy. They are common ground already, and long have been. Thus, the common ground for common sense began even before this election, in the sphere of defense and foreign affairs. No one—not even Churchill—could conjure up the ghost of a dispute over those vital subjects. This underlines the electorate's attitude of expectancy; expectation of common ground for common sense in other directions, too.

After the national finances are tackled, grimmer specters rear their heads: the too-long-postponed showdown with the State Department over the sterling area; the rate of repaying sterling debts to under-developed countries, tying in directly with Truman's Point Four; the reconciliation between sterling-area trade and European trade (making a success of the OEEC and ECA before 1952); the bridging of the dollar gap before 1952; the facing of the first installments of repayment on the Canadian and American Loans of 1945-1946 (due in 1951-1952); the mess over unified defenses in Europe; the worse mess over India-Burma-Malaya and all Southeast Asia; the development of the resources of Africa and other colonies.

Here are a host of grievous economic problems, all in the field of foreign affairs. They never entered the electoral campaign. The Socialists had already yielded the point about repaying the sterling debt. Apart from that, one can see scarcely a single item

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on which Conservative Opposition and Socialist Government couldn't sit down and agree right away, for the years up to and including 1952—that year of the Great Divide in postwar affairs, which hangs like a cloudy question mark over all Europe.

As to the actual mechanics of government, there is only one course of action which will save face for both the main parties: Form a co-operative Parliament in which both Government and Opposition share responsibility without becoming equal partners in a coalition like that which ruled in wartime. Anyone who upset *that* applecart would bear a load of responsibility in the ensuing (and decisive) election. No one will lightly court that blame. Thus what the politicians and journalists now take to be an unmitigated disaster—and what, as far as we hear, the State Department and American press take to be a disaster, too—may well turn out to be the biggest political blessing for Britain in the twentieth century.

There remains the question of internal *party* politics.

The middle-of-the-road Liberals—nine M.P.'s out of 624 in the Commons—will continue as an independent party. But they will draw fewer votes because the lines are now drawn so clearly. Inside the Conservative Party—with Mr. Churchill now virtually ruled out of another premiership—the "Young Tories," promoters of the progressive Industrial Charter and somewhat-belated supporters of a "soundly administered" welfare state, will win out.

In this Parliament the Conservatives are younger than the members of any other party. Their average age is far below that of the Socialists, who now seem rather antiquated gentlemen of the 1919-1939 school, if not of the pre-1914 one. The common ground between the more numerous Young Conservatives and the older and staider Socialists has been enlarged, as the extremists in each party have been lopped off.

Inside Labour, the fiercest ideological fight of this century has now opened. It revolves around the personality of Aneurin Bevan, the leader of the left wing, the idol of the younger *Keep Left* and *Keeping Left* pamphleteers who edit and write for *The New Statesman and Nation* and the *Tribune*. With him are ranged, according to credible report, John Strachey, Hugh Dalton, and Emanuel Shinwell, among the ministers. On the other, the moderate wing of Labour, are Attlee, Morrison, Bevin, and the bulk of the frightened new M.P.'s, getting on in years after a staid lifetime in the trade unions and co-ops. The fight is for the body and soul of British Socialism; but it is only another round in a struggle which burst out in the young party in 1911-1914, again in the bad aftermath of the First World War (culminating in the 1926 general strike), and again in Labour's minority Government under Premier Ramsay MacDonald in 1929-1931.

It is a struggle between continental Marxism and the old-line Christian Socialism of British Nonconformism, personified in Attlee and Cripps. Though these two cliques will now be slugging it out day by day behind the Labour scenery; the Labour play, "In Unity Is Strength!" will be going on out front, lest the Opposition publicize the weakness of the Labour company and force down the curtain. Battle as these two Labour factions will in secret, they dare not hold their fight in public, for if they did they might scare too many Labour voters.

Thus everyone—literally everyone—must behave well from now on in order to win next time. There's been nothing like it for over a century; and, as at a children's birthday party, the great question is: "Whose nerves will crack first under the unaccustomed strain of being good?"

All the shrewd and sensible elector can now say is that the Conservatives have recently had more practice.

—Graham Hutton

Conflicting Views—the British Press

" . . . the election has failed in its main purpose. It was, or should have been, an election for the choice of a Government to carry the country through its trials with a firm hand. But the slight lead retained by the Labour Party is insufficient, even with the support of a Liberal handful on Liberal terms, to enable Labour to govern effectively. Instead of a new Government, refreshed by the people's support, the country, and its representatives, stand arrayed in two nearly equal halves. After the drama of the tussle comes a great uncertainty . . ."—*The Times*, London, February 25, 1950.

"The result of last week's general election is a great calamity. . . . Very few people, if any, foresaw the dreadful possibility that the election might divest His Majesty's Government of even such power of taking decisions and making policy as they possessed. . . .

"Possibly the chief concession that an arrangement would require of the Government would be that they should bring the Conservative leaders into constant consultation on foreign affairs and defense policy, the two subjects which are not, or should not be, at issue between the parties. In return for this, the Opposition should make it clear that they will [not] try to defeat the Government on snap divisions. . . . Perhaps it would be more important as a practical matter for the Opposition to provide "pairs" for those Ministers who are compelled to be absent from the House of Commons on public business. . . ."—*The Economist*, March 4, 1950.

"The Parliamentary Labour Party has returned to Westminster in fighting mood, anxious to accept whatever challenge the Tories may offer and to go ahead with the Party's programme in Parliament, even at the risk of an early dissolution. . . .

"The country split on class lines to an unprecedented degree. Both sides were clearly prompted by fear—the middle classes by fear of more drastic "levelling down," the workers by fear lest a Labour defeat would expose them once again to the miseries they remembered. . . .

"It may be immediately wise for Labour to concentrate on other aspects of Socialism rather than "nationalisation," but we can see no evidence for the press view that the country has voted against national ownership. The facts are, first, that Labour's total vote increased by well over one million; and, secondly, that constituencies directly concerned by present or prospective nationalisation . . . registered their confidence in Socialist policy. . . ."—*The New Statesman and Nation*, March 4, 1950.

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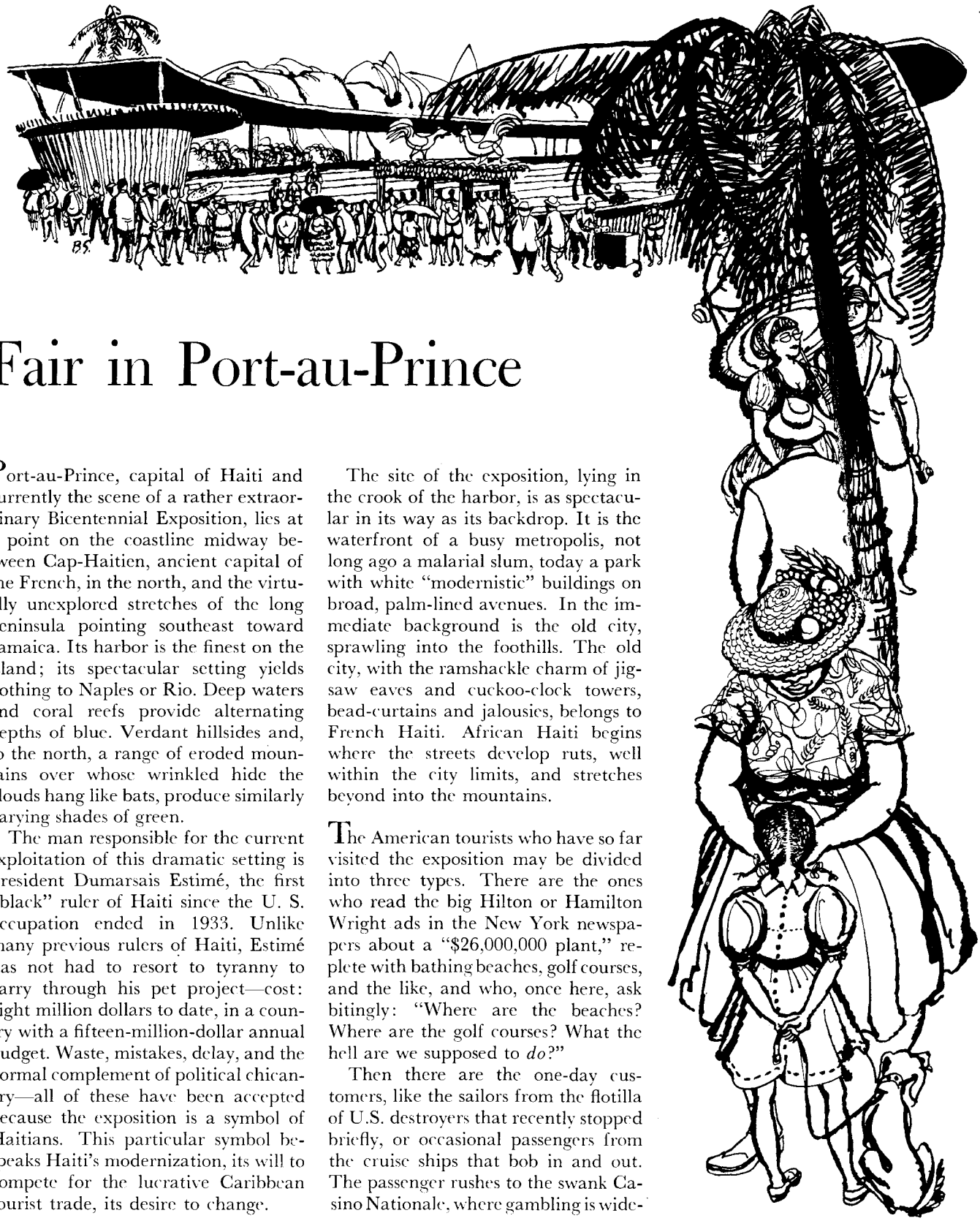

Fair in Port-au-Prince

Port-au-Prince, capital of Haiti and currently the scene of a rather extraordinary Bicentennial Exposition, lies at a point on the coastline midway between Cap-Haitien, ancient capital of the French, in the north, and the virtually unexplored stretches of the long peninsula pointing southeast toward Jamaica. Its harbor is the finest on the island; its spectacular setting yields nothing to Naples or Rio. Deep waters and coral reefs provide alternating depths of blue. Verdant hillsides and, to the north, a range of eroded mountains over whose wrinkled hide the clouds hang like bats, produce similarly varying shades of green.

The man responsible for the current exploitation of this dramatic setting is President Dumarsais Estimé, the first "black" ruler of Haiti since the U. S. occupation ended in 1933. Unlike many previous rulers of Haiti, Estimé has not had to resort to tyranny to carry through his pet project—cost: eight million dollars to date, in a country with a fifteen-million-dollar annual budget. Waste, mistakes, delay, and the normal complement of political chicanery—all of these have been accepted because the exposition is a symbol of Haitians. This particular symbol bespeaks Haiti's modernization, its will to compete for the lucrative Caribbean tourist trade, its desire to change.

The site of the exposition, lying in the crook of the harbor, is as spectacular in its way as its backdrop. It is the waterfront of a busy metropolis, not long ago a malarial slum, today a park with white "modernistic" buildings on broad, palm-lined avenues. In the immediate background is the old city, sprawling into the foothills. The old city, with the ramshackle charm of jigsaw eaves and cuckoo-clock towers, bead-curtains and jalousies, belongs to French Haiti. African Haiti begins where the streets develop ruts, well within the city limits, and stretches beyond into the mountains.

The American tourists who have so far visited the exposition may be divided into three types. There are the ones who read the big Hilton or Hamilton Wright ads in the New York newspapers about a "$26,000,000 plant," replete with bathing beaches, golf courses, and the like, and who, once here, ask bitingly: "Where are the beaches? Where are the golf courses? What the hell are we supposed to *do*?"

Then there are the one-day customers, like the sailors from the flotilla of U.S. destroyers that recently stopped briefly, or occasional passengers from the cruise ships that bob in and out. The passenger rushes to the swank Casino Nationale, where gambling is wide-

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open, twenty-five imported croupiers make twenty-five dollars a night, and sums running into four figures are made and lost at roulette or "21." The sailor plays the slot machines, takes in the strip-tease or freak show in the exposition's carnival, and kills the rest of the day beside the swimming pool at Thorland in nearby Bizoton.

Finally there are those who find Haiti an experience not to be duplicated anywhere. These tourists, more sensitive and reflective than the others, have sharply noted the extreme contrasts of natural beauty and primitive squalor, of creative vigor and national poverty. For them the somewhat pathetic bravura of the exposition has become transparent. They see that it is above all Haiti's first big protest against dirt floors, disease, and undernourishment.

The Haitian himself is proud of the exposition. I have met members of the élite—once a parasitical caste, predominantly mulatto, tending to look down elegant French noses at the "black" peasant, but of recent years busier, less provincial, and far less color-conscious—who have not visited the exposition "yet." There are some who openly regard the whole business as a golden opportunity to make a killing, and who have made killings—contractors, concessionaires, politicians, even artists. The average member of the élite is perhaps a little cynical about the government's chances of recovering what it has spent for a symbol, but he is as proud of what the symbol stands for as the man in the street is.

So far very few of the three million peasants in this republic of 11,069 square miles have come to the fair. Not that they wouldn't like to—if they know about it at all. But how is the Haitian peasant to get there? And, since not very many peasants have annual cash incomes of more than twenty dollars, what would they have to spend, even if they could leave their bean patches? There was some talk of free bus service to and from remote parts of the island, but the fact of the matter is that Haitian peasants need expositions less than they need shoes, clothing, education, higher incomes, and a little leisure—and they stand little chance of getting these before the republic builds irrigation projects, roads, and bridges, develops mass education, and broadens the franchise. The present government insists it can do nothing in this direction unless it can get big foreign loans (which it can't) or attract a great influx of tourists to a "progressive" Haiti. Hence the exposition.

Meanwhile, to be sure, thousands of city folk and even some peasants can and do visit the exposition. They may be seen on holiday nights when the general entrance fee is lifted, swarming through the free agricultural implement exhibit or the ethnological and art displays, or spending an average of ten cents a night on the ferris wheel or in the penny-gambling booths of the Ross Manning carnival imported from the United States. Thirty-five thousand Haitians jam the tents on Saturday nights, most of them "just looking." They make the tents sway with their shoving and laughter, and even the native police join the fun.

On a November day over two years ago, I had occasion to visit what is now precisely the center of the exposition grounds. The waterfront area was at that time the most densely crowded slum in Haiti, a stinking, undrained swamp covered with jerry-built palm-thatched *cailles,* and known as *Trou Cochon.* Rats, scrawny chickens, and pigs shared the hovels with diseased adults and undernourished children. And in the middle of it, holding court in king's robe and jewelled crown, lived Hector Hyppolite, the voodoo priest whose painting has since become famous in Paris and New York.

Hyppolite was throwing a *bamboche* (party) that day to celebrate the completion of a home-made fishing-smack. Inside, in the *tonnelle* of his "temple," a guitar, a saxophone, and a banjo provided polite jazz for Hyppolite's bourgeois friends. Outside, between the hut and the fantastic boat held together with bits of string, some really hot *rada* drums and some even hotter native rum were providing inspiration for a native woman in process of tearing her clothes off under the spell of Hyppolite's favorite *loa,* Maîtresse la Sirène, goddess of the sea.

A year ago August Schmiedigan, a central-European architect-engineer, emerged as impresario extraordinary of the exposition. By then considerable money must already have been spent. Schmiedigan himself cost still more money. A man with a passion for political intrigue, he made up in charm and imagination for his weakness in administrative efficiency. His imagination, for example, led him to foresee the profits to be made by becoming the agent for big construction and electrical-equipment companies abroad that were later given contracts for exposition work.

So the exposition, originally planned for a budget of four million, has now cost almost double that figure, and the final cost is not known. Possibly this fact lies behind Schmiedigan's recent, sudden, and unexplained flight to the United States. While he was here, at any rate, Schmiedigan did his job, and Haiti is grateful. What he lacked in taste, he made up in bravura. It was a foregone conclusion that he would not make any extensive use of the world-famous talent of the *Centre d'Art,* but murals by Castera Bazile, Wilson Bigaud, and Dieudonné Cedor were finally accepted for the *Palais du Tourisme* after President Estimé himself intervened.

Whether by choice or necessity, Schmiedigan's happiest move was his selection of a young Haitian architect, Albert Mangonès, to plan the amusement section. Mangonès, who had traveled in Europe, and won prizes and scholarships at Cornell, was under something of a cloud in his native land as an alleged political extremist, but Schmiedigan backed his imaginative conceptions to the limit. Since Schmiedigan's departure, Mangonès has been in virtual charge.

Having prevailed on the authorities to leave intact a magnificent stand of densely planted fifty-foot royal palms, Mangonès proceeded to direct the drainage of the area into a serpentine reflecting-basin, and against this backdrop erected an open-air theater. Here, several times weekly, one may see a really inspired troupe of native ex-voodoo dancers, expertly selected and

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directed by Jean Léon Destiné, Haiti's foremost choreographer and dancer.

Farther down the waterfront, Mangonès built a cockfight arena. Planned as a series of non-concentric ellipses, with cantilevered half-roofs, this structure employed, perhaps for the first time, all the native materials of Haiti in a thoroughly modern ensemble—woven-mat curtains, sisal-rope ceilings, piers of naked coconut-palm trunks set at angles, and green bamboo packed tightly in rows to form partitions.

The *Palais des Beaux Arts,* with its superbly mounted loan collection of ethnological pieces and a representative hanging of primitive art, is the joint work of Henri Rivière, French museum expert, and Jean Chenet, assistant director of the *Centre d'Art.*

Mangonès has managed to give the exposition some co-ordination and Haitian flavor, but the ghost of Schmiedigan presides over the rows of rather empty tunnel-like buildings, as well as over the drying up of funds with which his successor is plagued. The palm garden has perforce been converted into a night club, and the cockfight arena has been let out to concessionaires, who have sublet stands to vendors.

A greater dignity presides over the northern extremity of the exposition, where various nations friendly to Haiti have erected pavilions. Some of these, like the graceful Venezuelan building, on which that oil-happy republic has lavished more than three hundred thousand dollars, will later serve as embassies. The United States pavilion is still a-building. In fact, so are most of the structures in this section, though it was scheduled to open officially on February 12.

So far bookings at the new hotels have been disappointing, and the big cruise ships haven't altered their itineraries to stop at Haiti, but the Haitians are still proud of the fair. They think of it as their own accomplishment and they stand by it. The foreigner has turned up his nose at their "backwardness" or condescended to be charmed by their "picturesqueness"; this will show him. The Haitians are grateful to President Estimé for having conceived and carried out so spectacular a showpiece of modernism. They regard it—as he does himself—as the visible proof of what Haiti expects to do with itself from here on out. —SELDEN RODMAN

Books

Terrifying Success Story

STALIN: A POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY. *By Isaac Deutscher. 570 pp. New York: Oxford University Press. $5.*

Mr. Deutscher's is a difficult book to put down once you have started reading it. You may think the author has missed a point here and there, or surmise that he does some moderately tall guessing when evidence is unavailable or inconclusive, or that he sometimes displays a naive confidence in statistics. But in the main the greatest success story of current history is related with a detachment and scholarly acumen which, in the nature of things, writers like Trotsky or Souvarine could not muster.

To be sure, the story may still end with a macabre bang, since ours is a trigger-happy world which can load its pistols with plutonium bombs or even, possibly, hydrogen bombs. At the moment, however, the seventy-one-year-old heir to the throne of Ivan the Terrible is riding higher than Caesar Augustus or Frederick II. By comparison with his imperialistic exploits, those of Alexander the Great or Genghis Khan look like minor-league performances. He has pushed Russia westward past the Elbe and southeastward to the fringe of Burma. Eliciting from slave intellectual labor more eulogies than have been collected by all the prima donnas of all time, he is revered by untold thousands, even in the free western world, as the man who will oust the mighty from their seats and exalt those of low degree.

The blasphemy which, speaking in terms of Jewish-Christian civilization, is implicit in this attitude has been a source of wonderment to many. How is it that an admittedly brutal dictator, who has turned scores of old cronies over to the firing squad, and shipped millions of innocent men and women to concentration camps, can nevertheless persuade intellectuals in countries like the United States, Britain, and France to commit high treason against their own governments? One may argue that the explanation is the persistent lure of the Communist myth, and the fact that many have not yet caught up with Stalin's deviations from the pattern of the mass dream.

This explanation accounts for some of the exaltation of Stalin, but by no means for all of it. A few years ago, Stalin was doing business with three unusually astute men: Churchill, Hitler, and Roosevelt. Winston Churchill may be removed from the list because by the time matters became really critical Britain had been reduced to the status of a beleaguered island. It was Hitler who puzzled, intrigued, and finally hardened Stalin's soul. At first the Kremlin was unable to take Nazism seriously. Stalin looked upon it as a temporary road block thrown across the route of a forward-marching proletariat; but he slowly came to feel that it would teach him some useful things about disposing of hated western democracy. The story of the deal between the Russian and the Austro-German, as told by Deutscher on the basis of the evidence so far made available, would be unbelievable if it were not true.

Then came the war. Up to a certain

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almost exactly determinable moment, the Nazi could probably have pocketed the victory. Cold-blooded German military men usually say that the fateful hour was that of the Moscow offensive during the first year of the conflict. At any rate, it is still possible to close one's eyes and visualize a German empire stretching eastward to the Volga, with France and the Low Countries as western satellites. The same query that we made about Stalin then presents itself: Why did millions of people elect to follow a Führer who talked rubbish (verbally he and Stalin are peers) and who ordered mass murder without a qualm? I have talked with dozens of gifted ex-Nazis. They all agreed that Hitler was a sort of unbalanced genius, but beyond that they could not go.

Once, in a dreary interrogation camp, I talked with the German general who had besieged Leningrad. He stated that he could easily have marched in and taken the city, but Hitler forbade him, on the ground that Germany would have to feed the population, since failure to do this would give Churchill an opportunity to unleash another humanitarian diatribe. The general indicated that he had been thoroughly appalled. But when I asked him whether he had not then come to the conclusion that the Führer was an oaf who ought to be liquidated, he said "No." The great man had looked like destiny itself, and who was a poor general to quarrel with the fates? Undoubtedly his blunders, and his senseless crimes, now make Hitler seem vastly inferior to Stalin. But up until the time when he invited doom by putting his faith in the invincibility of the Japanese Samurai caste and declaring war on the United States, the Nazi ran neck and neck with the Bolshevik.

Mr. Roosevelt was a wholly different kind of person. The evidence indicates that he tried very hard to convince Hitler of the futility of war, and that only after all efforts had led to naught did he himself think in terms of tanks and planes. It is also clear that during the early stages of the conflict the President was deeply concerned about the possibility that when the shooting stopped, Moscow would own the driver's seat. But in the end, he was, if actions are indications of thought, as completely caught in the Stalin spider-web as anybody else.

The triumph of the Russian leader over the foreign statesmen of his time is no more complete or surprising than is his victory over his domestic rivals. He bested Trotsky and finally ordered his murder. Old Bolshevik comrades stood at the bar of justice and confessed to him that they were vermin of a particularly vile sort. By his order millions of peasants died with less fuss than cattle make in a slaughterhouse. Multitudes detested him, but feared him even more. Deutscher thinks that dozens of men have had a chance to shoot him, but nobody has. There is not even a record of an attempt to smuggle a suitcase bomb into the Kremlin.

Now Stalin has the world by the tail. Tonight another crop of about a thousand fugitives will have sneaked through Europe's Iron Curtain. They will kneel down and kiss the earth, because it means freedom. In Berlin there are droves of people who are ready to endure almost anything if only they can keep out of Stalin's clutches. Riding on German third-class trains, I have listened to endless first-hand tales of Soviet barbarity. And yet almost all these men and women think their respite is strictly temporary.

Today we can perforce only sit around wondering when Stalin is likely to start something else. And wondering, too, whether he will get away with it. That there should be someone in the world, with vast power at his command, who shies from nothing in order to get everything he wants, is a fact so difficult to credit that it half lames one's resistance by overtaxing one's imagination. In several absorbing passages, Deutscher compares Stalin with Robespierre, and argues that the Frenchman was nipped by his own guillotine because the revolution which he for a time dominated had no blueprint. It was just a kind of "rising against," not a "rising *for*," and so its momentum finally carried it against Robespierre.

Because Bolshevik doctrine was fixed in advance, the "plans" devised for carrying it out could always be tested for their orthodoxy, and Stalin saw to it that he became the arbiter of sound teaching, the Grand Inquisitor of Marxism. Accordingly, his opponents could criticize the practical steps taken, or they might be appalled (as many of them were) by the cruelty of the régime. But they did not succeed in proving, even to themselves, that they could legitimately revise the catechism. In other words, Stalin has brought about the most complete union of "church" and "state" in history.

That is why opposition to Stalin must offer effective antagonism to both aspects of his power. On the one hand, Russia is a state, with powers and policies which need definition. On the other hand, it represents a sort of prophetic theology. If there is any socio-economic doctrine in the world strong enough to threaten the orthodoxy of Moscow, it must be social democracy, understood as the theory of a welfare state, regardless of the varying amounts of elbow room made available for free initiative, either industrial or ideological.

The grandeur of the social-democratic doctrine (which incidentally is expounded in the preamble to our Constitution) is rooted in its reverence for freedom as the ultimate desirable life-form of man, as he is envisaged by Christianity and the classical philosophers. But it is impossible to give adequate social expression to this concept of freedom unless power is distributed and used with a grave sense of respon-

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sibility for the general welfare. Unfortunately it is usually not so employed. And so those who are entrenched, as well as those who consider themselves victims, are always tempted to get hold of the power and wield it with greater or lesser abrogations of the liberty of others.

Stalin's momentous success is the source of poisons which now bubble in the veins of the free world, even as the triumph of Lenin bred the fever of Nazism in Germany. With us the victims, real or imagined, not only can complain, but they can band together, demonstrate, and conspire. In Russia the only authorized assemblies of protest are the forced-labor camps. Who among us does not occasionally feel that he would relish a law designed to put other people in their places and keep them there—labor, perhaps, or saloon keepers, or Zionists, or the Catholic Church? And doesn't the very suppression of these feelings give rise to vaporish outpourings of compensatory sentimentality? We wish-dream Stalin out of the world by constructing a world state, or we suppose that war can be banned from the minds of men by mailing pamphlets about the Declaration on Human Rights to Bismarck, North Dakota.

For the people of the United States the problem has become so vast and terrifying that merely looking at it induces hypnotic trances. Fifty years ago, we were provincial citizens sowing a little imperialistic wild oats in Cuba and the Philippines. The center of the universe was elsewhere, and we thought its location was permanent. When we went to war twice after the turn of the century, we grumbled along rather leisurely in the wake of others. Today we are the chap with the Mauser in the jungle, with a few helpers for company. Nobody knows how fast most of our companions will run when the lion roars. Nobody can even tell whether it will be possible for us to shoot before he makes his final close-in leap. It is not a pleasant spot, but we are there. The events which have ended in our being cast for this part are the same as those which, in the past thirty years, have determined the stature of Stalin. We can look back, review them, and shake our heads. But we cannot subtract one cubit from his size or ours.

So it is imperative to take inventory of our strength and his strength, our weakness and his weakness. In this task Deutscher can be of considerable assistance. His book may well be too schematic. Indeed, for all I know it may be wrong about some matters of importance. But it will serve as a reliable alarm clock for far too many Americans who are still taking siestas while their beds are on fire. The time has come to clarify our minds, strengthen our hearts, clean our guns, and take off excess weight.

In particular, those who have never experienced the genuinely frightening impact of totalitarian propaganda need to find out before it is too late how thin America's voice it. It sounds, the farther away from these shores one gets, like a mixture of "Sweet Adeline" and a commercial. We have got to give it an octave higher and an octave lower. There are a lot of people in the world who would listen.

—George N. Shuster

Death of a Document

No one knows how many documents there are in Washington. The figure probably runs up to a trillion or two, but even the most ardent statistician could never compute it, for two simple reasons: First, most government employees are never quite sure what a document, or, to give it its proper name, "a Federal Record," is. They generally operate on the assumption that any piece of paper with a Federal letterhead on it that is produced or received by their agency is, automatically, a document. This status confers upon the piece of paper a type of immortality which also helps to make the statistician's task impossible: A document can almost never be simply thrown away.

The well-trained government officer does know that documents may be "transferred," "retired," or "disposed of." To give him insight into these three processes, the National Archives has recently put out a book entitled *Disposition of Federal Records* (National Archives Publication 50-3).

Since the work of the Hoover Commission has engendered considerable talk about government "streamlining," it was with some optimism that I recently started to leaf through this typographically-attractive, forty-page, paper volume.

It was written by Theodore R. Schellenberg, Program Adviser of the National Archives. Mr. Schellenberg, in his foreword, starts off forthrightly by showing himself fully awake to the danger of too many documents:

"The problem of managing Federal records is difficult because—

*they are very large in volume

*they accumulate rapidly"

Unfortunately it isn't very long before Mr. Schellenberg falls into the crabwise verbiage and methods of approach that beset many bureaucrats, but he does make one or two more attempts at briskness. In his first chapter he barks out a series of commands that

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make the whole problem sound exceedingly simple:

"Appoint a Records Officer"
"Adopt a Plan of Action"
"Make the Program Official"
"Train Personnel"
"Get Cooperation"

Also to Mr. Schellenberg's credit is the appearance, on page 11, of the term "thrown away." Unhappily this was the only time that I found this usage in the book.

Chapter I goes into some of the more abstract aspects of the struggle between people and paper:

"In appraising items on a disposal list or schedule, dependable judgments cannot be made as to what should be destroyed without knowing what is retained Similarly in accessioning work, dependable judgments of the value of a given body of records offered for transfer cannot be made without knowing their significance to the over-all documentation of the agency."

Next the author goes into a short-lived attempt to personify the papers and make them the villains of the piece, by references to having them "brought under control," and to "determination of [their] life-expectancy."

It soon becomes apparent, though, that Mr. Schellenberg's sympathies are really with the documents. Along here, for instance, he says, "The most effective method of dealing with records that will become useless is to prepare a schedule for their disposal." This strikes me as a genial approach to extermination, since "preparing a schedule for disposal" bears only the same relationship to getting rid of a piece of paper as tacking up a "Wanted" notice does to catching a criminal.

Chapter II is entitled "What Are Records?" and contains some admirable clarifications: The distinction made here is that between "record" and "nonrecord" material: "Nonrecord materials include materials that do not serve record purposes and that were not officially *made or received.*" (Italics mine.)

Nonrecord materials also include: "privately purchased books and other publications and correspondence and other records pertaining to private personal matters that have been kept at an office for convenience." Leaving aside the overtones of intrigue in "private personal matters that have been kept at an office for convenience," we find that nonrecord material also takes in "notices of holidays or of Red Cross or Community Chest appeals . . ."

Under the topic, "What Values Do Records Have?" Mr. Schellenberg also buries a couple of valuable definitions. He explains the word "policy" thus: "The term 'policy' simply indicates that an agency has decided upon a course of action that is to be followed in more than one of its transactions."

Such lucidities, though, are badly offset by statements like, "The accessioning policies of the National Archives derive from its responsibility for the *oversight* and care of all records of the government that have enduring value," (my italics), and by Mr. Schellenberg's suggestion that agencies should "centralize their relationships" with the National Archives. These remarks are included in Chapter V, in which Mr. Schellenberg comes out strongly in favor of agencies' "retiring" their records to his own outfit—The National Archives. He makes this procedure sound attractive by mentioning only three different forms that have to be filled out.

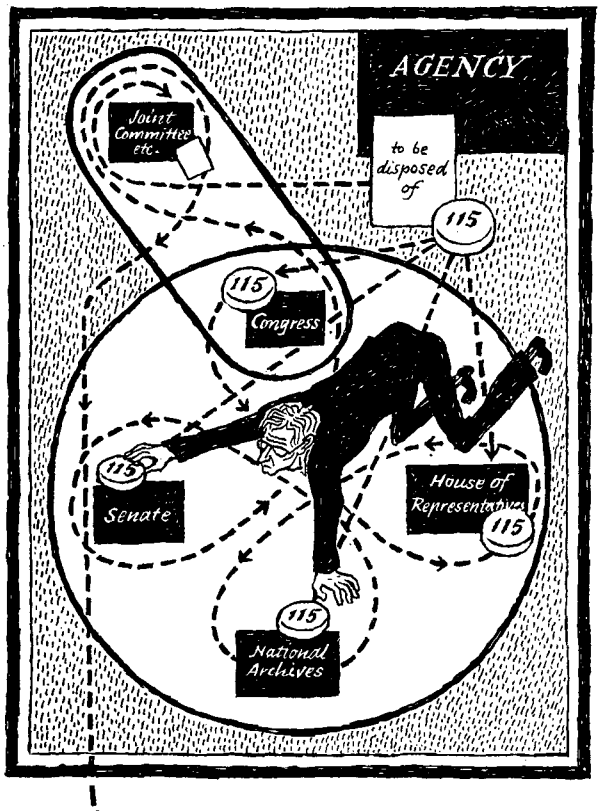
If, however, an agency chief is still fool enough to want actually to *"dispose of"* his useless documents, Mr. Schellenberg, in the final chapter, wearily outlines the routine for him. He begins grumpily with, "The disposal of records, it has been noted, is the negative aspect of the problem of records disposition," and warns that extreme caution must be taken before records are "alienated or destroyed."

For one thing, "Congressional clearance of all lists and schedules is required." This job is handled by the Joint Committee on the Disposition of Executive Papers. But the agency is still not in the clear even after it has caught the committee's eye. For now, "Standard Form 115 entitled 'Request for Authority to Dispose of Records' should be prepared in at least five copies." One of these goes to the National Archives, one to the Senate, one to the House of Representatives, and one comes back to the agency after the final Congressional O.K. The fifth is presumably filed pending the start of disposal procedures for *it*.

Mr. Schellenberg now hopefully offers a final chance of reprieve for the doomed document. Under "Methods of Disposal" he lists "Selling as waste paper," "Destroying by burning or otherwise," and, finally, "Transferring to non-Government agencies." The first two methods he treats curtly. The last he expatiates upon encouragingly for three paragraphs.

The author has included only one loophole for the by-this-time undoubtedly depressed Records Officer. On page 25 he has been forced to mention Section 10 of the Records Disposal Act, which mentions records that "are a continuing menace to human health or life or to property." "In such a case the head of the agency . . . should notify the Archivist . . . that he has determined that the records constitute a menace. If the Archivist concurs . . . he will direct the immediate removal of the menace by destruction of the records or by other appropriate means."

Of course that "other appropriate means" still leaves the Archivist a chance to sneak the records into one of his own hideouts. —William Knapp



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To Man's Measure . . .

Spies, Prayer, and Catastrophe

Long ago, in the spring of 1918, Priolet, head of the French counter-spy police for the Paris district, said: "My spies always confess. They always know that I know. That keeps my conscience clean. When I entered Mata Hari's bedroom in the early morning to arrest her—it is also in the early morning that we take them out to be shot—I presented myself: 'Priolet,' I said, 'Commissaire for the fortified camp of Paris,' and she said: 'Allow me to get dressed; when you come yourself it is all over.' The public was excited about Mata Hari because she was a dancer, and they thought she came straight out of a Javanese temple with bells tinkling; but she was only a Dutch girl who worked an oriental routine in night clubs and spied for money. She was uninteresting; spies are almost always uninteresting; she was not important. It is Clemenceau who is important. In a war it is the government that is important if it is more stubborn than the enemy government; it is the soldiers who are important if they are more stubborn than the enemy soldiers—until and through the last quarter hour, until the decision. Nothing else is seriously important."

Supposing we knew everything—statistics of syphilis in the Russian Army, present whereabouts of every soldier in the Russian Army, present whereabouts of every piece of plutonium in Russia—what would we do? If our spies, and theirs, procured the theoretical maximum of information, what would we do, what would they do? If nothing veiled the truth from either side, would we be more advanced? Spies prepare a balance sheet; they are auditors of events they do not control; they count the planes, submarines, guns; they report the fissioned atom; they gossip after the fact. Poland is enslaved; the spies describe enslavement. America is strong; the spies report home on the characteristics of strength. When they tell what has happened it is usually too late; when they tell what is going to happen it is often too soon. They are like the statesmen.

We have the telephone, the two-way, short-wave, portable radio for our spies to use wherever we send them. We can have as many spies as we want. So can the British, the French, the Russians—and the Guatemalans. The spy is the small boy who runs back from his observation post at the corner to say that the Morton Street gang has turned left into Bedford. He is also Mark Twain charting the Mississippi, Dante bringing back the map of Hell. Man did not have to wait for the twentieth century to have more than sufficient information about the enemy. There is no novelty, no invention about the spy, but also there is nothing to be done about the hold he has on our imagination, a hold that chokes it. We still send in the breakfast-food box tops to get the premium—a badge marked Junior Secret Agent.

Until recently Americans thought that all spies were foreigners. Now we know that there are American agents—a more respectable term. The spy is shot in wartime; in peace, imprisoned. The next step is to realize that every man who in peacetime worries about war is an agent—a spy—imprisoned in analysis. Walter Lippmann, Ilya Ehrenburg, Anne O'Hare McCormick, François Mauriac, like spies, collect their material and make their reports once a week, or twice a week, or daily, to the world. The political writers are not as good spies as the poets. Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations* is filled with intelligence reports. George Meredith was an excellent agent. He said: "We are betrayed by what is false within."

The pointed finger of respectability has caught up with Willy Gerber, a Swiss Army mechanic. Before a Swiss military court he pleaded guilty to "military, economic, and political espionage." Since 1937, he had been a paid agent, industriously serving the United States, Britain, France, Sweden, Turkey, and Yugoslavia. He has now been sentenced to twenty years—a little spy withdrawn from circulation.

Recently Dr. Fuchs was sentenced to fourteen years for transmitting atomic information to Russia. He was a far more important figure than the Swiss little Willy. He operated in another order of magnitude, transmitting not secrets only, but inner devotion. Practically, however, the results are similar. Little Willy said he saw a soldier get on a train. Cross-checking this information with that supplied by a hundred other little Willies, Allied Intelligence knew that the German 1201st Div. was moving to spot X on the map and was thus enabled to bring up the 972nd British, Russian (Russia was an ally), New Zealand, American Div. to meet it. Tit-tat-toe, and you had a readjustment of forces. Through Dr. Fuchs, the Russians (no longer allies) are enabled to bring into suitable position an atomic mass of maneuver opposite our own. This, again, is a simple readjustment of forces—tit-tat-toe. Or, as Mr. T. S. Eliot says, the end is the beginning.

Keeping the secret of atomic energy is like keeping secret the magic whereby the *S.S. Clermont* moved against the current up the Hudson River. The scientists are not alchemists working in a Faustian cellar. A scientist on the University of Chicago Round Table of the Air talked clearly enough for any spy to hear. "We just let it go into the air," he said of the H-bomb. "I have asked myself how much . . . heavy hydrogen do we have to detonate to kill everybody on earth. . . ?" Professor Szilard then answered himself: about five hundred tons.

The Rev. Donald Harrington, of the Community Church in New York, together with some of his congregation, recently fasted for forty hours in atonement for our having unleashed the atom bomb—the Model-T one. He and his congregation prayed that we may not proceed to kill everyone on earth. Military, economic, and political matters are not the only objects of man's Intelligence Service: Man attempts also to spy into his inscrutable destiny.

—Gouverneur Paulding

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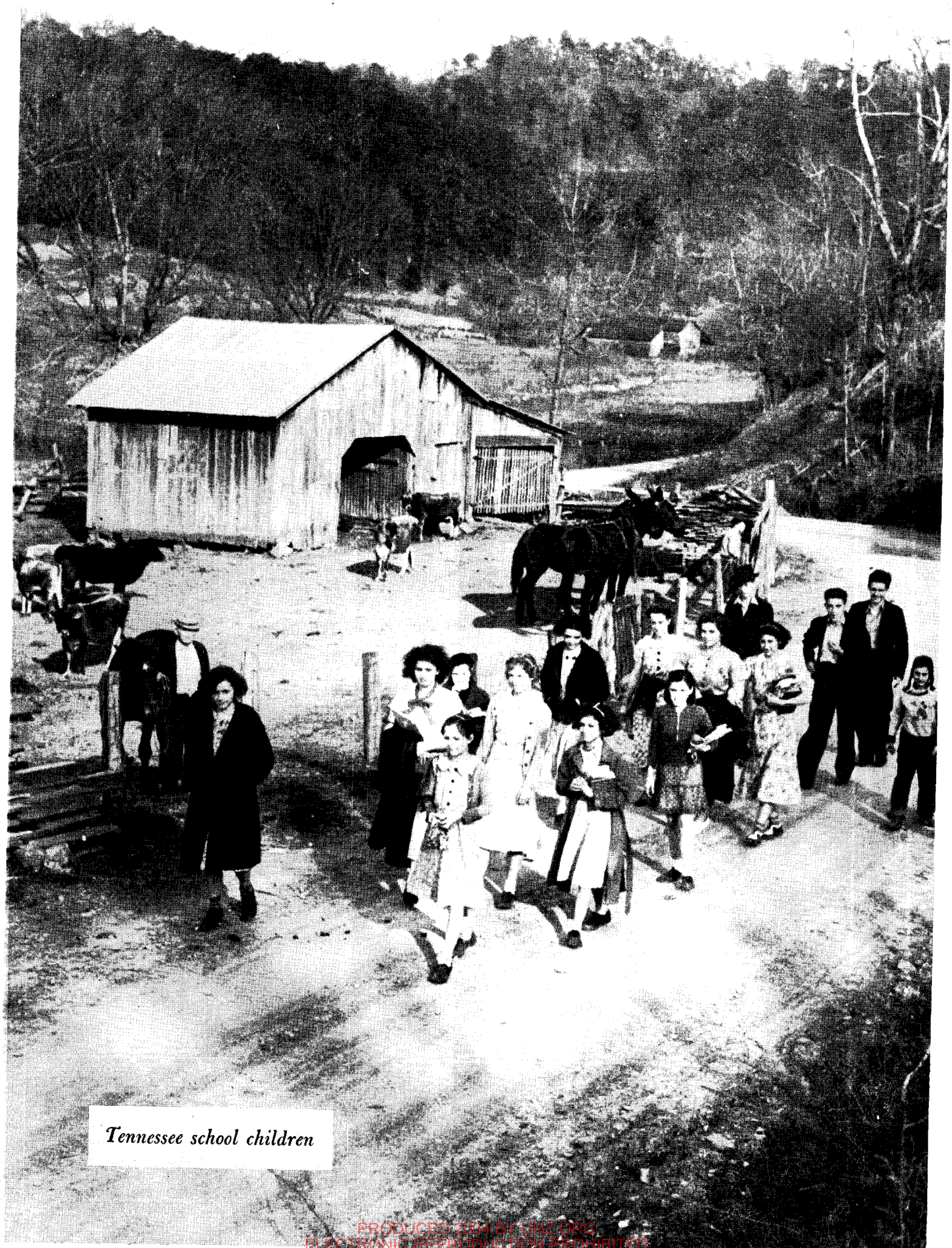

Tennessee school children

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Big Questions for Big Labor

NEXT ISSUE

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